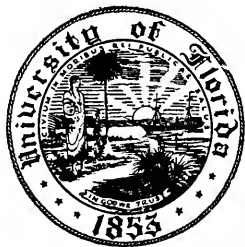


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Selected Papers in Literature and Criticism

Number 1

ADVENTURES IN THE MIDDLE AGES



LAURA HIBBARD LOOMIS
Anno Aetatis Suae LXI

Selected Papers in Literature and Criticism Number 1

ADVENTURES
IN THE
MIDDLE AGES

A MEMORIAL COLLECTION
OF ESSAYS AND STUDIES

by Laura Hibbard Loomis



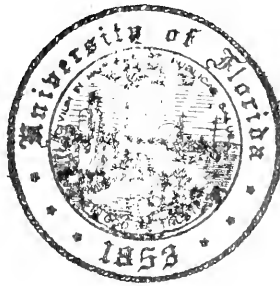
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CURRICULUM VITAE
LAURAE HIBBARD LOOMIS

Born: Chicago, Illinois, June 18, 1883. Father, Frederick Allen Hibbard.
Mother, Annie McMullen Hibbard.

Education: Hyde Park High School, Chicago.
Wellesley College, 1901-1905. Phi Beta Kappa. B.A.
Wellesley College, 1908. M.A.
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Wellesley College, 1916-1943. Katharine Lee Bates Professor of
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Vice-president of the Modern Language Association of America,
1926.

Married to Roger Sherman Loomis, June 6, 1925.

Died at New York, August 25, 1960.

FOREWORD

LAURA HIBBARD LOOMIS—AN APPRECIATION

One of my first meetings with Laura Hibbard was, fittingly, in a library. She was walking down the middle aisle in the library at Wellesley College, a tall slender girl with finely cut features and heavy braids of chestnut hair bound round her head. Both arms were full of books. Too full; there was a sudden avalanche. I hurried to the rescue.

“Oh, thank you,” she said. “I’ve got such a mass of material collected. And I’m so excited. Miss Jewett is letting me do some really scholarly work on these medieval poems. It’s thrilling—like following up clues in a detective case, only of course much nicer. I’m now on the trail of a bloody sark—sark is a shirt, you know. It’s all such fun!”

Thus, as a Wagnerian opera introduces its theme motif in the overture, Laura Hibbard Loomis stated her life-long theme song. The joy, the thrill of research. As I watched her through the years as she worked, again and again I thought of Tennyson’s *Merlin and the Gleam*:

And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.

She never failed to follow the Gleam.

In her college days she was not what is known as a “grind.” She took her work easily and happily in her stride. But her lack of robust health led her, naturally, to choose the quieter forms of non-academic activities. She was most at home among books and her devoted friends.

As a teacher at Mount Holyoke and later at Wellesley, she

inevitably attracted to her classes the finest type of student specializing in English literature, and succeeded in kindling in them the bright flame of her own love of study and imparting high standards of scholarship. After her happy marriage to Professor Roger Loomis her work expanded and became more and more rich and rewarding. I have a series of memories of those middle years. One of them brings back a gathering of friends to whom she and her husband showed some of the pictures from the extraordinary collection later published as *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art*. Her face glowed with pleasure at being able to share the treasures which they had found in the libraries, castles, and museums of Europe. A second memory is especially vivid. We were motoring in Wales, enjoying a "medieval pilgrimage," when, as sometimes happened, she was confined to her room by a sharp attack of arthritis. She sat up in bed and read aloud her chapter on *Gawain and the Green Knight*, which is included in this volume. It is a rare pleasure to read to oneself this brilliantly interpretive and beautifully written study of the poem; but the perfection of her reading and the very sound of her voice made listening an unforgettable experience.

Nor did this power of vivid and lively presentation of the fruits of her research diminish as she grew older. In her seventy-fourth year she gave courses in Chaucer and medieval literature at the Columbia Summer Session. Though the heat was appalling, high in the nineties, she held enthralled a goodly group of men and women students. Someone said to someone, "Do you know how old she is?", and the reply came back, "Yes. But I don't believe it."

Notable as was her ardor for scholarship, it was not the whole of Laura Loomis, for she had a character as rare as her mind. Stoically, uncomplainingly she endured pain. She thought of others before herself. Once when riding in the woods near Wellesley she fell from her horse and suffered a concussion. When consciousness returned, she asked, "What happened?" Informed that the horse might have stumbled, she said instantly, "Was the horse hurt?" That response came from a deep-seated instinct of self-forgetfulness. A devout Christian, she displayed a true charity of mind and heart. One scholar wrote after her death: "I never heard a bitter or uncharitable judgement fall from her lips."

Laura had beauty, charm, and grace. Every time I took her to lunch or tea with friends of mine who had heard of her but

never seen her, I was afterwards besieged with "Why, you never told us how fascinating she is, or how lovely!" In her early years she was rather shy, but this diffidence disappeared gradually in the course of a rich life of travel and achievement and multiplying friendships. With her, growing old went with a heightening of her powers, a fruition of her whole nature. A few months before her death, when she was staying on the Italian Riviera, I accompanied her to a friend's villa. She was radiant. She sat in a high-backed carved chair, her eyes as blue as her dress, and her white hair even lovelier than the chestnut braids of her youth. Our host, an elderly Italian scholar and composer, after watching her for some time, came over and stood before her.

"Signora Loomis," he said, with a courtly bow, "you look like a duchess of the Italian Renaissance." Like a flash came her answer, "No, sir, if you please! Not the Renaissance. The Middle Ages!"

She was a beautiful lady, an ardent scholar, a radiant human being.

HELENE BULLOCK

THE SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS OF LAURA HIBBARD LOOMIS

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ESSAYS

A BRASSBOUND HOLIDAY*

I

THE charm of brasses, so far as I can discover, has not been said or sung in America. Bowls and candlesticks and brazen odds and ends we have; but with us "no witness lives in brass," and no poet would be likely to sing in Shakespearean wise of "brass eternal," unless he were moved by wistful impecuniosity. We have none of those Monumental Brasses which, to the mind of the devotee, are the only real brasses at all. They are known, of course, to scholars errant, and an occasional tourist abroad gets a glimpse of them; but here, for the most part, a brass suggests some small, mildly decorative product of Arts and Crafts work, and a brass-rubber, a person with a polishing cloth.

All this is of more importance than at first appears. Brass-rubbing is one of the most delightful adventures in the world. Not only is it a craft that quickens the eye and enthralls the hand, but it has a power of magic that works amazing transformations. It must be pursued in England, where the real brasses in largest number are to be found; but since a goodly part of America, from June to September, embarks nowadays for England, that is no obstacle. What matters is, that for those who go, if they have willing spirits, the lost romance of travel, despite the clouds of tourist dust, can be restored, and even England can seem again an unfamiliar, almost an untrodden, land.

An English brass-rubber would not, in all probability, acknowledge such romantic possibilities in his craft. That would be partly because he *is* English, but also because he has been long enough a type to surprise neither himself nor his neighbors. It took a fairly long time to make him one; for brasses were laid down in England in the thirteenth century, and they were not

* From the *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1923.
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really observed until the nineteenth. Then the English antiquary began to move cautiously among them; but it was long years before that elderly person, with his penchant for writing about his choicest finds in the obscurest little local papers, quickened anything like an awareness of brasses among even his academic or ecclesiastical countrymen. When young university men began to share his interest, they hunted brasses as he did, chiefly as a mine of historical information about costume, armor, heraldry, and a good many other things. Not even William Morris, who went a-brassing so eagerly in his youth, ever set forth, in print at least, the full measure of their possibilities.

But it is time, at last, to insist that, in the quest for brasses, any happy vagrant can find more romance than history. They will lead him almost invariably to the loveliest of lovely places; they will reward his inexpert hand with the creation of lovely things; and they will give him such glimpses of bygone personality, such whimsical contacts, not to say conflicts, with living "Characters," as will be to him forever memorable.

For all this it needs no learning, no grave preparation. The more unexpectedly the vagrant becomes a lover of brasses, the better. Let him read as I did, in a dull guide-book, that "the finest brass in England" is but a few miles away, and let him feel no more inkling of his fate than the uneasy promptings of a tourist conscience, and the desire, perhaps, to escape from a noisy crowded town to the possible quiet of a village. Let him fare forth then, and so find the way "to al good aventure." It was in such fashion that I set out to find my first brass, and the reward still seems beyond all deserving.

Spring was in the air, and "the bursting boughs of May" overhung the green hedgerows of Shropshire. Beyond the towering shadows of some great cedars of Lebanon lay the little churchyard of Acton Burnell, where hosts of golden daffodils were breaking in sunlit waves against the low green mounds. By a stile stood an Ancient, who murmured the thought of one's heart: "A sweet place, a pretty place to lie." Within the gray walls of the little church—walls that went back to Saxon times—was a cool and holy quiet.

The old man led the way to a stone-canopied tomb set at one side of the altar. On its flat top lay the effigy in brass of Sir Nicholas Burnell, warrior and gentleman, of the fourteenth century. The Ancient beheld him lovingly, but there was a plaintive note in his

voice as he ran his finger over the clear, deeply incised lines: "Ees a good un to do, ee is. Rubbers used to come frequent. They be forgetting ee now."

In an instant like that, desire is born, and eager curiosity. Who would not want to know about the rubbers, and how they rub? Who would not seek to find another place as enchanting, and another knight of such brazen charm? Who would not hunt shy antiquaries, or those books in which they tell where the best brasses can be found? Thus inspired, the merest novice learns to make for himself a new kind of map, a map of the principal brass counties—Kent, Surrey, Essex, Norfolk; but rarely does he put down on it a name of which any tourist has ever heard. It becomes a map of little towns and noble parish churches, of places often within an hour's ride from London, but too small, sometimes, for even a railway station. Only the ubiquitous motor-road, or pleasant footpaths, winding through azure "sheets of hyacinths" or pale banks of primroses, lead to such destinations. They belong to that ancient rural England of which the poets make us dream, but of which no "Cook's man" ever speaks.

The brass-books tell nothing, of course, of environment: that is altogether a matter of adventuring chance. But when it happens repeatedly that the brasses are found in places to make one henceforth "babble o' green fields," one comes to look for such exterior beauty as an expected thing. Within the churches, too, are treasures without number—old glass, old carvings, old saints and devils fading amiably away together on ancient walls; but they are not, as they often are in the cathedrals, too numerous, too notable, too crowded about for comfort. And of all such things, best to the rubber, as he walks delicately before the altar, are the brasses which lie before it in dim, gold-colored splendor.

II

It is time, perhaps, to expound the rubber's craft. At best, it is not long to learn, though it is always sufficiently arduous. In really serious efforts it calls for the muscular activity of a char-woman, combined with the delicacy of touch that a well-trained student of Braille is supposed to acquire. But even the worst of amateurs can learn, after he has acquired the magic heel-ball or cobbler's wax, and long rolls of paper, to use them with effect. Like the

child making the perennial discovery that pictures come through when paper is laid over a patterned surface and rubbed with crayon, he spreads out his white yards and begins, timidly at first, but with growing boldness, to rub at the brass beneath. He must not rub too hard, or he will tear the paper; he must not rub too lightly, or his impression will be vague and weak. He must not move the paper until the rubbing is completed; and since he must work in churches, he must remember the hours of church services, for he is *persona non grata* once they begin. Indeed, it is no wonder that ecclesiastical authority does not bend too favorable an eye on the enthusiast who must at need curl up on an altar tomb, or recline full-length on a church floor, his sheets of paper about him, and his hands, and in all likelihood his face, assuming the hue of the black heel-ball with which he works. But of the rubber and the church, more anon.

The difficulties of the gentle craft are, obviously, of minor sort, and are more than offset by the fact that it needs no long apprenticeship. When anyone has found his brass, all he has to do is to rub. No matter how untrained is his hand, he will find that it will make him possessed of these noble shapes and patterns of antiquity.

The older the brasses, the nobler they are, and the easier to do. They lack the frills and furbelows, the futile attempts at shading, of a later time. They are often heroic in size, and they have a kind of heroic simplicity about them, like figures in ancient epic poetry. Great lords and ladies, prelates and civilians, they lie in characteristic costume and state, august and venerable. Sometimes the brass-maker has placed their figures, as mediæval sculptors placed their saints, in what seems a niche, with shafts at the side and a canopy above. In such case, as the rubber sees its perfect geometric curves growing on his paper, he may look up at the traceried window above his own head, or his inward architectural eye may recall another elsewhere, which might well have served for model. At any rate, he murmurs "Early Decorated" to himself, in a glow of happy recognition.

The figures themselves, wholly apart from all antiquarian considerations, are even more satisfying. They come slowly into view—the features stern or lovely or humorously quaint, the head-gear of armor or veils, the costume rich in broideries of clear and beautiful design. However conventionalized the faces, they yet convey some real sense of personality. The warriors, with eyes as

fierce as their tight-shut lips, bear the look of an age of Blood and Iron. Yet among them can be found a Sir Robert de Setvans (Chartham, Kent), gloriously young and debonair, his head un-helmeted, and his hair as curly as if, like that of Chaucer's Squire, it had been "leyd in presse." The women's faces have a rather too consistent piety; but in their long slim figures, in their slender clasped hands, there is grace incarnate. One must, however, keep to the ladies antedating 1500, for stoutness seems to have been one of the admired minor gifts of the Early Renaissance.

At the foot of each figure there is usually a kind of tail-piece. The lords and ladies rest their quiet feet against some faithful dog or lion. The rubber learns to take a lively interest in these friendly beasts and their individual characteristics: in the genial waggishness of the Cambridge dog of Sir Roger de Trumpington, or in the zeal with which at Stoke d'Abernon (Surrey), the lion of Sir John d'Abernon seizes in his teeth his master's lance. If the brass is large, the rubber may, indeed, be weary when he comes to these last bits; but in them, even more than in the stately figures above, he is likely to find that blessed touch of Nature which links some clever old craftsman to any beholder of his work. The old graver was not always in romantic or courtly mood: he could, at will, be literal and realistic to a degree. To folk in trade, he gave the signs of that trade. Rich wool merchants, to whose trade with Flanders the introduction of Flemish brasses into fourteenth-century England was due, have their feet disposed on woolsacks, or, less comfortably, on a woolpack and on a sheep. A wealthy tailor has beneath him his faithful shears, and a notary his bottle of ink. With true Gothic liveliness little scenes are introduced—fights of wodehouses (savage men) with monsters, scenes at the windmill, and other bits of rural life. On a famous brass at King's Lynn, a Peacock Feast bears witness to the sumptuous luxury of the great days when an Edward Rex came to Norfolk.

III

The "dear delights" of brass-rubbing, I hope, grow apparent. But lest anyone think they are chiefly of an aesthetic nature, let me hasten on to their dramatic possibilities. These arise from the fact that though brasses in general rest in the august keeping of the Church of England, brasses in particular are in the care of

vicars of small country parishes. True, there are some brasses in the great cathedrals; but in such places comparatively few have escaped intact from the religious fanatic, the commercial looter, the devastating restorer; and it is, therefore, chiefly with the country vicars, whose parish church has suffered less from such vandalism, that the rubber has to deal.

Unless an American is familiar with a certain type of English novel, the country vicar is apt to seem a strange and sometimes a difficult species. In his own setting, remote, secure, the vicar is not quite like anything else in this hustling world. It is he from whom permission to rub the brasses must be secured; it is his wholly unpredictable disposition on which the fate of the whole expedition depends. He may be avaricious for his church and exact a pious but extortionate tax; he may be as gentle as a dove and brood tenderly, not to say chattily, over one's labors; he may be as odd a mixture of diverse things as he whom I encountered on a last, most memorable quest.

I found myself in a village too small to have more than one short street. A nobly built church towered high above tiny cottages, and over the long low almshouses that had once been part of a monastery. With difficulty, in a town so unused to strangers, I found the promise of "bed and breakfast." But the promise was fulfilled in excellence, and it was with happy spirit that I sought the Vicar. His house lay at the end of the street; his gates were forbidding, and his bell had a sepulchral sound. A deaf and ancient maiden gave way to a Mrs. Vicar, whose function was clearly Cerberean. She made it plain that her reverend husband was not to be disturbed thus early in the morning.

Chagrined, but not disheartened, I returned to the village and besought the caretaker of the church to open its heavily barred portals. She was as gentle as she was old, and the great key trembled in her frail hands. She was one for whom the little ritual of her office would never be outworn. The thin faint trickle of her talk flowed on over a lesson well learned, and freer than most from fallacy.

My eyes feasted, meanwhile, on the treasures of the church, and most of all on the wonderful brasses lying just as they had been placed some six centuries before. Each one was known to the old woman, and was the object of her humble veneration. She had a special feeling, I remember, for one noble lady whose husband's brass had been removed in the sixteenth century.

“She’s been looking at the vacant place ever since,” said the old voice sympathetically.

When I began to question of herself, she answered with timid pride.

“Yes, forty-two year I’ve been here, come next Michaelmas. Vicar’s been here forty-two.”

“That is a long time,” I said, “for people to have one vicar. They must all be very fond of him now?”

“Well, no,” came the quiet answer, “hardly I’d say fond. We all knows each other, but there’s few understands Vicar. I manage because he and me has been here so long; but Vicar’s not an easy man. He’s old, Vicar is, and he’s notions, lots of notions.”

She told me of his anxious care of the church, and of how it had come to pass that it had to be kept closed save for the Sunday services.

“There’s lots of folk to bother Vicar,” she said. “There’s the bad boys, and there’s the trippers that mess up the churchyard, and there’s the brass-rubbers too. They’re real naughty sometimes, the rubbers are.”

With a certain embarrassment, I asked what they did.

“Well, some’s good, of course, but some’s bad. Vicar don’t like them noways. They’ll come, and one will go secret-like, not telling of the others, and he’ll get permission from Vicar. Then, when I let him into the church, unless I take my key away, he’ll let in the others. They’ll all rub and track around careless-like, and won’t take no pains about their boots nor their heel-balls nor anything. And they’re not polite sometimes. One man he opened the Good Book and laughed; and I had to get real angry to make him behave.”

The picture of this small wren of a woman opposed to the rude practitioner of the gentle craft was singularly touching. I tried to lead her to happier reminiscences, until it was time to make a second call on the Vicar.

This time it was he himself who opened the door. He looked tremendously old, but far from feeble. His Adam’s apple rose and fell far above an ill-fitting collar, and in his watery blue eye was the gleam of battle. Without a word of wasted greeting he led me within and thrust into my hands a typewritten card. It took the form of a solemn covenant: “I, So and so, do promise:

(1) to take off my boots; (2) to pay five shillings; (3) to use paper forty-five inches wide.”

Consternation overwhelmed me. In all the summer's experience as a brass-rubber never had I seen or heard of paper that size. For a moment, temptation was acute to evade the preposterous requirements. Rolls of paper turned sidewise might be held to be of any width, but the memory of other faithless rubbers prevented even that pretense. I confessed my lack, and an inexorable finger pointed to the door.

Again I walked down the village street. Disappointment grew more vexed and more obstinate. Though I knew how hopeless it would be to find any kind of brass-rubbing paper in so small a place, I hastened into the one general shop the village boasted. Its owner was one-eyed, but that one gleamed with sudden frenzy as I made my request.

“Vicar won't let ye rub the brasses,” he fairly shouted. “He's a pup, Vicar is. Thinks he owns the whole church; thinks the brasses is his; thinks the whole place is his—”

His wife rushed round the counter to calm her irate spouse. But his loud tones had already attracted others, and in a trice a little crowd had grown around me. Not often does one get so swiftly to the heart of a community; not often does the phlegmatic English villager so rouse himself to the expression of his woes. Vicar scared the children; he scolded the grown folk, and irked them by an ever-growing number of small restrictions.

“He's too old, is Vicar,” said one stout woman; “he's all wore out come every Sunday. He means well, but he's hard. And there's never getting anything out of him, especially on a Monday. I could have telled ye that.”

As the talk went on,—and there was an hour or so of it,—the pathos of this little rural drama grew more plain. Its centre was a shepherd grown too old and bitter and wise for his flock, a keeper of treasures who had somehow lost the best. But suddenly the voices stopped. Without, in the village street, the Vicar himself, pedaling an ancient tricycle with slow carefulness, was just coming to a stop. The village folk shrank back in somewhat shamefaced confusion. The stout woman pushed me to the door, whispering loudly, “Vicar's after ye, I bet.”

The Vicar met me with dignity, though there was the trace of a faint flush on his withered cheek. He intimated that, if he could see my paper, he might be able to allow me to do a detail

at least from the brasses. With his own key he unlocked the doors of the church, and in a short time we were conversing with perfect amity on the subject dear to our hearts. In this guise, wrought by I know not what genial magic of afternoon, the Vicar was revealed as a charming old scholar and gentleman, willing to let me do whatsoever I would. From one pocket he drew his own little manuscript volume of notes on the brasses; in a dusty corner, he found the necessary weights for my paper; from a hidden recess he brought forth a great roll. The paper was more than forty-five inches wide; it was mounted on linen; and on it was a superb rubbing of one of the most famous of the brasses. Together we unrolled its great length; humbly I marveled at it; together we rolled it up. Into the Vicar's eyes came the ghost of a twinkle.

"I keep it," he remarked confidentially, "to scare brass-rubbers with. They are apt to go off quickly when I show them that, or ask for paper of that size."

I, who had lingered so wrathfully, made bold to ask why he wished to scare them. Among those who cared enough to come, surely there would be few who would ever do harm.

The thin lips of the man of God clicked together.

"Everyone does harm," he said, as he turned and stalked out among the silent villagers.

GOLD OF PALERMO

WHATEVER one brings into Palermo one takes gold out of it. Not, of course, in that vulgar lucre which flies as nimbly in Palermo as elsewhere, but in some essence, distilled as it were, from such brightness as exists in equal measure almost nowhere else in the world. Though one's mortal eye may sometimes be troubled by the dust of the long white roads or of those buildings which give Palermo one of its many names, La Bianca, the White; though the ear may suffer, especially in the humbler most Sicilian parts of the city, from such clamor as out-vociferates even Naples or Algiers, these things are as nothing before the sense of Palermo itself. Ages ago men saw that it was a golden place; they called its perfect setting, the great crescent set between the azure sea and the headland mountains, the Concha d'Oro, the shell that immemorially has held a treasure of beauty.

Lavish and pure and to a large degree unchanged by time or men, is Palermo's gold. Out of doors it lies chiefly in those orchards circling, tier upon tier, above the low-lying city. From Monreale, the small cathedral town set so proudly upon its once royal mount, some three miles from the city, the vista between seems filled with gardens of the Hesperides. Green and gold they crowd, as if like the wood of legend, they were moving upward with all their precious freight. Down among them tinkling waters cool their roots, waters that run in conduits first made, it may be, by Greeks and Romans, but used and far more extensively developed by the hands of those Arab conquerors who, for several centuries, before the Normans came, made Balerm, as they called it, and all its environs into gardens of delight. The trees are heavy with the many-shaded gold of oranges and tangerines, with the lemons, thousands upon thousands of them, hanging like inverted points of light, above the dark newly turned earth or above the feathery green of the fennel. There are lemon factories here and there along the roadside for the conversion of all this

loveliness into endless extracts and drinks, small factories where peel and pulp are used with a completeness exceeding even Scotch thrift, but the eye remembers not the economic aspect of the lemons, only their grace. Fruits of light, of sweetness too, sweeter sometimes than even the oranges which neighbor them, they are the constant wherewithal of refreshment and hospitality. Friendly peasants give gifts of them; little boys, little goats, pigs, men and women, eat lemons as a daily fruit. Lemons are food and gold for the poor of Palermo. On the trees, however, the myriads of them, so brightly shining against the darkness of the leaves, seem like tiny lanterns lit for an Emir's feast. These golden orchards, these faint musical waters, keep more livingly than anything else that glamorous charm which travelers from the East have always been so quick to feel. "May Allah give the city back to the Moslems," prayed an ardent ancient Arab.

At first glance Palermo seems brisk, modern, European: a vigorous tide of life flows through Sicily's capital. Yet though honking motors crowd them, the little Palermitan carts, lively with bells and gaily painted with antique legends, go none the less staunchly about their own business. They are drawn usually by that patient ass of which Palermitans say pityingly: "He draws wine and drinks water." Cart and ass and story-telling legend are all indigenous, all a part of that humorous colorful picturesqueness which no Eastern street is ever without. They might have belonged, as did certainly the ancestors of many of the drivers, in Arabian Balerm, the city of three hundred mosques, of countless gardens and palaces, a city that was like an enchantress enthroned. In the twelfth century, when the Normans conquered the island, they were in turn captured by her soft seductions. Their princes came to speak the language, to wear the dress, to build the buildings, to love the gardens, of the Orient they found there. Enviously in those days could a Moslem write:

"The pleasure palaces of the king encircle the city as a necklace clasps the throat of a maiden—so that the prince, without ever going outside these fair places and pleasure grounds can pass from one to another of the gardens and open courts of Palermo. What delights he has there—may God prevent him from enjoying them!"

Yet though so much is changed, much is left. Something bright and fierce, as if born to desert suns, burns in the faces

that have not altogether lost their look of Saracenic inheritance. The East abides in tropic verdure throughout the city, in the tall palmettos before the cathedral doors of Monreale, in the great banyan trees that spread elephant-like, smoothly muscled limbs across the ground. Arab inscriptions are to be found here and there. Above slow waving palms coral-colored cupolas appear. The church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti with its five strange domes still visibly suggests a mosque; it keeps its cupolas, its white walls, a pointed Moorish arch or two, a window column drawn to threadlike thinness by those Oriental hands that loved to work with stone as with the filaments of lace; it keeps for cloister a place of flowers and birds and cool sweet-watered wells. Yellow jasmine hangs on the sunlit walls. Quietude broods there and time ceases. Soft-sandaled Moslem, barefoot monk, alike disturb not even by their ghosts, its gentle dreaming. The small sweet place, like the larger and yet more lovely cloister of Monreale, framed by marbles as softly parti-colored as the flowers, with its mirror-like fountain and pool, is an oasis set in stone.

Lost as are the enchantments of the old Moorish Norman pleasure palaces, their names and fragments of their beauty still linger about Palermo: La Zisa, once a glory, a pearl, of buildings, La Favarah, La Cuba. At La Zisa, or in King Roger's room in the Royal Palace, enough is left of magic for him who would conjure back the past. La Zisa, externally a grim, fortress-like building, opens its interior central hall on what was once a lake but is now a dull and dusty square; in this palace the King's room comes only after interminable corridors and rooms filled with perhaps the world's worst royal furniture. But in each a touch of pure marvel still redeems the place. Radiant as they were in the twelfth century, the mosaic-encrusted walls glow with undimmed golden backgrounds. On the wall at La Zisa jewelled peacocks walk forever across the sunny pleasaunce of gold. Beneath them a fountain springs and falls, its cooled waters flowing over black marble slabs and becoming a thing at once of light and darkness. Above it hangs a ceiling fashioned, it may be, to suggest the frozen grace of those actual stalacuites in the dim cavern on Monte Pellegrino, which is now used as a church for Palermo's patron, Santa Rosalia. In the gorgeous mosaics of King Roger's room, against the same vibrant gold, mounted centaurs charge, bows bent and arrows on point of flight, leopards and peacocks pause, bright and beautiful as they were in Eden. Here as in

those more holy and more famous mosaics that cover the walls of that jewel of jewels, the Capella Palatina, in the same vast palace as King Roger's room, or on the great storied walls of the Cathedral at Monreale, the tufted palmettos stand with their red fringed fruit just as they stand without in the city squares.

Christian as are those greatest glories of Palermo, its almost unrivalled series of Christian mosaics, still they are essentially of Byzantium and glamorous with Eastern color. Naively yet superbly, with patent decorative conventions, with masterly simplicities, they tell in vivid rhythmic sequence the stories of the Testaments, Old and New. High on the lofty walls the great figures move against the immutable golden glow. Beneath the direct and august gaze of Deity calling into being Life and Light, beneath flame-winged archangels and god-like patriarchs and Apostles, mere humanity shrinks to childish stature. Little and wondering, awed and fascinated, it must wander on over floors of such marble richness as belong to a genie's palace in a tale of the Arabian Nights; it must stand marveling, looking up and so taking away, yet leaving unravaged the Orient gold of Palermo.

STUDIES

THE SWORD BRIDGE OF CHRETIEN DE TROYES AND ITS CELTIC ORIGINAL*

THE origin of the perilous bridge in mediaeval allegory and romance has commonly been traced to the concept of the soul bridge leading to the Kingdom of the Dead, an Eastern idea that had found its way into Christian legend before the time of Mohammed,¹ or to the Perilous Passage of pagan Celtic story, a *motif* which some scholars have thought to be, so far as the bridge is concerned, simply a specialized form of the first. The purpose of this paper is to define more closely the significance of these two concepts, and to consider their connection with the sword bridge in Chrétien's *Conte de la Charette*, one of the earliest instances, if not the earliest, in which the perilous bridge appears in purely romantic literature. The result of this comparison seems to indicate that the soul bridge offers but a very doubtful antecedent to the sword bridge. If the Perilous Passage be differentiated from the soul bridge, it comes nearer to a satisfactory explanation of Chrétien's invention, but even so it leaves unexplained the form and the function of the sword bridge. It is believed that another explanation can be offered which not only accounts for the peculiar nature of the bridge but confirms in an unexpected way the theory of the Celtic origin of the story as a whole.

Chrétien's account of the sword bridge is found in an episode peculiarly detailed and picturesque. He tells us that the realm of Méléagant, the land "dont nul ne retourne," is defended by two bridges. When Gawain and Lancelot on their errand of rescuing Queen Guinevere from her captor, Méléagant, come to the

* From *The Romanic Review*, IV (1913), 166-190.

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¹ H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances*, Lond., 1893, II, 399. The following terms are here synonymous: Soul bridge, Bridge of the Dead, Bridge of Judgment, of Purgatory.

bridges, Gawain takes the first, the *pont evage*,² which has as much water above as below it; Lancelot takes the second and more terrifying one:

“Li autres ponz est plus malvès v. 668
Et est plus perilleus asez,
N’ainz par homme ne fu pasez,
Qu’il est comme espée trenchanz;
Et por ce trestotes les genz
L’apelent le pont de l’espée.”

In another passage, after describing the terrible river which ran beneath the bridge, Chrétien goes on to say:

“Et li ponz qui est en travers v. 3017
Estoit de toz autres divers,
Qu’ainz teus ne fu ne ja mès n’iert;
Ainz ne vi, se nus m’en requiert,
Si mal pont ne si male planche:
D’une espée forbie et blanche
Estoit li ponz sur l’eve froide;
Mes l’espée estoit fort et roide
Et avoit deus lances de lonc.
De chascune part ot un tronc
Ou l’espée estoit cloufichiée; . . .

² This bridge seems directly reminiscent of the concept of an Otherworld lying underneath water. Although such a concept is not exclusively Celtic, one of the frequent episodes of old Irish story is that of a hero going by way of an under-water passage to a Land of Marvel. Loegaire, having dived through a loch, reaches the Kingdom of Fiachna of the Fairy Folk, *Loegaire mac Crimtham*, Book of Leinster, summarized by A. C. L. Brown, *Studies and Notes in Phil. and Lit.*, 1903, VIII, 40-1; cf. 76. The home of Terror, the head-cutting champion, is beneath the water, *Fled Bricrend*, ed. G. Henderson, Irish Texts, 1889, p. 99. Diarmaid falls through a well to find an Elysian land beneath, *Gilla Decair, Silva Gadelica*, I, 258-276; tr. II, 55, 292: Murough, in his quest for the ferule, dives through a lake into Tír na nóg, *Giolla an Fhiughha, Lad of the Ferule*, ed. D. Hyde, Irish Texts, 1899. Brian, one of the sons of Turenn, puts on his water dress, and leaps into the sea. After a fortnight he comes to the sunken island belonging to the Women of Fincara. Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances*, 87. The sword bridge and the one beneath the water are so closely connected, it seems probable they are derived from the same kind of material. If the whole episode of Guinevere’s abduction be Celtic in character (see below, n. 35), and the evidence just cited be taken as establishing the fact that a perilous under-water passage was a familiar means of approach to the fairy Otherworld, there seems some reason for accepting the *pont evage* as a simple enough development from the old Irish legends. Foerster, *Der Karrenritter*, Halle, 1889, p. LXIX, refuses to see in it more than a “Dublette” of the sword bridge. Foerster, *ibid.*, p. LXXII and Gaston Paris, *Romania*, XII, 530 ff., comment on the use of the under-water bridge by Chrétien and André le Chapelain.

Si ne semble pas qui la voit
Qu'ele puisse grant fès porter.”³

Seeing the bridges and the monsters on the further shore, his companions in vain try to dissuade Lancelot from crossing it. He does not heed them, but proceeds to take off the armour from his legs and hands, preferring to wound himself on the sword's sharp edges rather than to risk slipping into the river.

Much of this is repeated in the prose *Lancelot*.⁴ The British Museum Ms. 10293, for instance, uses almost the same words in describing the river. That the bridge is thought of as an actual sword is shown by the account of the preparations made for Lancelot's crossing. Those of his company “lacent les pans de son hauberc emsamble et li cueusent a gros fiex de fer qu'il auoient aporte et . . . ses manicles dedens li ont poiez a boine poi caude. et tant des pans comme il ot entre les cuisses. Et ce fu pour miex tenir contre [le trenchant de] lespee. . . . Lors se met desour la plance a cheuauchons si armes comme il estoit. . . . Et cil de la tour qui le voient en sont tout esbahi . . . mais quil voient quil se traîne par dessus lespee trenchant a la force des bras et a lempoignement des genous.”

With the notable popularity and influence of the Lancelot stories in general this paper has nothing to do, but it is interesting to note that the sword bridge *motif* in the fourteenth century had become practically a convention. In the *Sone de Nausay* it is evident that the poet did not feel it necessary to describe the bridge, presumably because its character was too well known:

“Et priés de la a une archie v. 17179
Ot en mer une grant cauchie
Qui jusc'as murs pas ne venoit;
Mais ensi que on tiesmongnoit
Que la fu li pons de l'espee,
U ot mainte tieste copee,
Quant Meleagans en fu sire.”⁵

³ Cf. *Romania*, XII, 468, 473, and Foerster's edition of the poem, op. cit. Chrétien's sword bridge is realistically treated by several medieval artists. Miniature in Ms. fr. 115, f. 355, Bibl. Nat. Paris, reproduced by A. Gasté, *Un Chapiteau de l'Eglise Saint Pierre de Caen*, Caen, 1887, Plate II.

⁴ Ed. by H. O. Sommer, Carnegie Institute, Washington, 1911, Vol. IV, p. 200. The ms. is of the fourteenth century. With this and the *Charette* passage cf. that in the *Livre d'Artus* (Bibl. Nat. fr. 337) summarized by E. Freymond, *Zeitschr. f. frz. Spr.*, XVII, § 113.

⁵ Ed. by M. Goldschmidt, *Litterarischer Verein in Stuttgart*, No. 216, 1899,

Other examples from romantic story which have been cited as analogous to the sword bridge are to be found in the *Mule sans Frein*,⁶ in the bridge tradition ascribed to Merlin,⁷ the *Perlesvaus*⁸

Cited by Foerster, p. XLIX; by J. D. Bruce, *PMLA*, XV, 336. Bruce discusses the relation of the Latin romance, *Historia Meriadoci* and the French poem. He thinks the mysterious island home of Gundebald in the *Historia Mer.*, a "terra de qua nemo revertitur" to which narrow causeways lead, represents a debased form of the description here quoted from the *Sone de Nausay*. The latter may not represent direct, but it certainly shows indirect, borrowing from Chrétien's poem.

⁶ Cited by G. Paris, *loc. cit.*, 510, n. 2. See *Histoire Littéraire*, XIX, 722, and the new edition of the poem by R. T. Hill, Baltimore, 1911. Verses 390-415 tell how Gawain comes to the river "plus bruianz que Loire—Si horrible, si cruel—ce est li fluns au deable!"

Tant est alez par lo rivage,
Que il a la planche trovee,
Qui n'est mie plus d'un dor lee,
Mais ele estoit de fer trestote.

He gets across by aid of the mule:

"Mes assez sovent avenoit
Que la moitez do pie estoit
Fors la planche par de desor."

Cf. *Romania*, XLI, 144.

⁷ Noted by L. A. Paton, *Studies in Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance*, Boston, 1903, p. 85, n. 3. Cf. Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, Bk. II, ch. 19: "Then Merlin let make a bridge of iron and steel into that island . . . and it was but half a foot broad, and there shall never a man pass that bridge . . . but if he were a passing good man and a knight without treachery or villainy." Although the form of this bridge is possibly suggestive of Chrétien's, its character is essentially different. It is a variant of those tests, usually of chastity, which form so popular a motif in medieval story. The tests were made by means of a fairy horn or mantle, girdle, crown, chair, flower, ring, etc. Cf. F. J. Child, *English and Scottish Ballads*, I, 257-274, 507; II, 502; III, 503; IV, 454; V, 212, 289. For the Celtic origin of the horn and mantle tests, cf. T. P. Cross, *Mod. Phil.*, X, 289 ff. The magical bridge which no imperfect knight or lady of Arthur's court could cross, appears in *Der jüngere Titurel*, written before 1272 (ed. K. A. Hahn, Leipzig, 1842, p. 232). Hans Sachs retells the story with Vergil for the magician in *König Artus mit der ehbrecher-brugk (Dichtungen)*, ed. Goedeke, I, 175). Cf. Child, I, 267, and Comparetti, *Virgil in the Middle Ages*, tr. E. F. Benecke, Lond., 1895, p. 339. Child notes: "'Die Brücke zu Karidol' (Cardoil) is alluded to in *Der Spiegel* by Meister Altswert" (ed. W. Holland u. A. Keller, Stuttgart, 1850, p. 179, v. 10-13). It is evident that the bridge test was late and can in no way explain Chrétien's idea in introducing the sword bridge.

⁸ *Perlesvaus*, tr. S. A. Evans, *High History of the Holy Grail*, 1898, Everyman's Library, 1910, from the French prose romance, *Perceval le Gallois*, ed. C. Potvin, Mons, 1866-71, Vol. I. Cf. the dissertation of W. A. Nitze, *Perlesvaus*, Baltimore, 1902, p. 104, note. The description of the bridge is given in the *High History*, p. 84-5. Gawain comes to King Fisherman's castle, which is surrounded by great waters which are crossed by three bridges. The first bridge (the Pont de l'Anguille) seemed a bow shot in length and in breadth not more than a foot. A knight came to the head of the bridge and bade Gawain cross without misgiving. Gawain "commendeth himself to God and smiteth his horse with spurs and findeth the bridge large and wide as he goeth forward, for by this passing were proven most of the knights. When he had passed beyond, the bridge, that was a draw-bridge,

and its Welsh version, *Y Seint Greal*,⁹ and again in the Dutch *Walewein*.¹⁰ The Perilous bridge also appears in Gautier's continuation of Chrétien's *Perceval ou Le Conte du Gral*.¹¹ The three instances (*Perlesvaus*, *Y Seint Greal*, *Walewein*), especially, show a confusion of ideas which can be made to prove almost anything. Chrétien's realistic and striking description of the sword bridge serves simply as a starting point, if, indeed, it be even that. The later texts describe a perilous bridge which suggests in some details the fairy bridge of old Celtic story, but is chiefly reminiscent of the soul bridge of Christian vision literature. It is in accounting for Chrétien's bridge by way of these later developments, and in defining the type of his original that the divergence of critical opinion begins.

In his famous study of Chrétien's poem in *Romania*, XII, p. 508 ff., Gaston Paris maintained that as Méléagant's kingdom could be identified with the Otherworld of pagan Celtic belief, the bridge which gave access to it could be taken as the Celtic version of "une croyance répandue chez un grand nombre de

lifted itself by engine behind him, for the water ran too swiftly for any other bridge to be made." The second bridge seemed to him as long as the other, and "so far as he could judge, the bridge was of ice, feeble and thin, and of a great height above the water." When he came in the midst thereof, "he seeth the bridge was the fairest and strongest that he ever beheld, and the abutments thereof were full of images." The third bridge was not terrifying. It had columns of gold; the figure of Christ appeared on the gate; at the sides were images of the Virgin and St. John, made out of gold and precious stones. An angel, "passing fair," pointed to the chapel where was the Holy Grail.

⁹ Ed. R. Williams, *Selections from the Hengwrt Mss.*, Lond., 1876-92, II, 241, 593. Same as above. Cf. J. Rhys, *Arthurian Legend*, Oxford, 1891, p. 56. The variability of size (the Welsh text says the bridge widened so that two carts might have passed abreast) recalled to Rhys the Bridge of Souls in the Irish visions. See below notes 14-16. He derived the name, Bridge of the Eel (Anguille), from the Snake, or Rainbow River which, Taliessin said, flowed around the world. Nitze, *Perlesvaus*, p. 104, suggests the reading *Aiguile*, Needle. If we are to deal with allegory, certainly it would seem that the Grail bridge was as effective a test of virtue as the "Needle's Eye" of the Scriptures!

¹⁰ *Roman van Walewein*, ed. W. J. A. Jonckbloet, Leiden, 1846-48, v. 4939.

¹¹ Perceval crossed a glass bridge by the aid of a mule lent him by a maiden. A knight then persuaded him to attempt crossing the Bridge Perilous and to attend the tourney at the Castle Orguellous. Cf. J. Weston, *Legend of Sir Perceval*, I, 24, 266. The Bridge Perilous was partly built by a fairy for her lover, Carimedic (Potvin, 28,825); when he was killed she left it incomplete, and vowed that none but the most valiant knight should cross it. When Perceval reached the high arch of the middle of the bridge, the half he had crossed swung around and fastened itself to the other side, so that he was enabled to cross in safety. Cf. Weston, II, 241; Paton, p. 85, n. 3; Nitze, *PMLA*, XXIV, 375. The influence of the marvels of Irish story is to be seen in both episodes. (See below, n. 25; 34).

peuples, aryens et autres, qu'il faut passer sur un semblable pont pour entrer dans le royaume des morts." He referred briefly to the Tchinvat bridge of the books of Zoroaster,¹² and to the similar bridge in Talmudic and Mohammedan tradition. In each case the bridge was crossed by the soul after death, and by its varying size and danger, it served as a judgment test. For the good it broadened to the length of nine javelins; for the wicked it narrowed to the width of a hair or thread, and this slender support became as sharp as a razor. The Tchinvat or *Kinvad* bridge, which may be taken as the archetype, stretched between high mountain peaks, and under it flowed a river. The dogs of Death¹³ guided souls to the bridge, and protected good souls from the assaults of demons. A perfumed breeze blew from Heaven across the bridge. A celestial mansion could be seen. If the soul missed its footing on the bridge it fell into the abode of Endless Darkness.

With some of these attributes of the Oriental soul bridge in mind, Gaston Paris sought to find analogues in ancient Celtic tradition. An analysis of the evidence presented by him and others shows that three points are at issue:

1. That the soul bridge, as a concept comparable to that in the *Avesta*, is found in Celtic literature:
2. That for western religious legend it is of Celtic origin:
3. That the sword bridge may be identified with it.

¹² *Avesta*, tr. J. Darmsteter, *Sacred Books of the East*, Oxford, 1895, Vols. IV and XXIII. For the *Kinvad* bridge see pages 156, 158, 218-9. Cf. D'Ancona, *I Precursori di Dante*, p. 46; W. Geiger, *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie*, Strassburg, 1896-1904; II, 684; also his *Civilization of the Ancient Iranians*, tr. Peshota Sanjānā, Lond., 1885, I, 100-102; N. Söderblom, *Rev. de l'hist. des Religions*, XXXIX, 411-412; *La vie future d'après le Mazdeisme*, 926. Cf. the prayer of the modern Parsi (cited by E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, N. Y., 1889, II, 100): "I believe . . . in the stepping over the bridge Chinvat, in an invariable recompense of good deeds . . . and of bad deeds." For the Mohammedan belief see Paris, loc. cit., p. 508; D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*. Sir Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, Edin., 1868, III, 136, comments on the "Brig o' Dread" in the Lyke-Wake dirge of the Yorkshire peasants.

¹³ M. Bloomfield, *Cerberus, The Dog of Hades, A Study in Comparative Mythology*, 1904; Tylor, II, 50, cites among other stories that of the Algonquin Indians in which a great dog guards the swinging bridge leading to the Villages of the Dead. Paris (509, n. 2) thinks the phantom lions seen by Lancelot reminiscent of the monsters which in so many myths guard the Land of the Dead. The concept reappears in several medieval visions of Heaven and Hell, but it is difficult to suppose that Chrétien's lions have any connection beyond that of a possible but most remote common source with the creatures described in the Vision of Tundal to which Paris alludes.

The analogue which Paris sought he found in the writings of the Celtic visionaries. It is, of course, undeniable that many details drawn from pagan lore appear in these writings, and Paris believed that the bridge concept which appears in the twelfth century visions of Tundal¹⁴ and Owain,¹⁵ or as he might have

¹⁴ *Visio Tundali*, ed. A. Wagner, Erlangen, 1882. The spirit of Tundal, a wicked Irish landlord, is taken while his body lies in a deathlike trance through Hell and Heaven. In Hell he sees two bridges, the first is a thousand feet long and one foot wide. It stretches from one mountain to another over a foul-smelling abyss. The second bridge is strewn with spikes; it is two miles long and scarcely a hand's breadth wide; it is guarded by fiery monsters. Over it Tundal has to drive a cow which he had once stolen. The vision seems to have taken place about 1149 and to have been written down before 1153, Ward, II, 417. Wagner lists 54 Mss. exclusive of those in the British Museum, which show the wide popularity of the story in Europe. Six Mss. of the twelfth century have the Prologue by Frater Marcus, the Irish monk, who wrote down the story which Tundal told him in Irish. The inclusion of the vision in the *Chronicon* of Helinand, a Cistercian monk of Froidmont (d. cir. 1229), whence it passed into the *Speculum Historiale* (Bk. XXVII, ch. 88) of Vincent of Beauvais, gives a further indication of its popularity and the means of its dispersion. Cf. Ward, II, 424 V. H. Friedel & K. Meyer, *La vision de Tondale*, 1907.

¹⁵ The Middle-English poem, *Owain Miles*, ed. E. Kölbing, *Eng. Stud.*, I, 99-112, and Marie de France's *L'Espurgatoire*, ed. T. A. Jenkins, Chicago, 1903, are both derived from the *Tractatus de Purgatorio S. Patricii* of the Benedictine monk, Henry of Saltrey, written about 1189. Henry wrote it down from the account given by Gilbert of Louth, a Cistercian monk, who had heard it from Owain himself, an Irish knight, who had visited St. Patrick's Purgatory, a pit on an island in Lough Derg, County Donegal. Among the other torments which Owain encountered was the Judgment bridge. It was of dizzy height, so slender that it would scarcely support one foot, and very slippery. When he called on the name of Christ the bridge grew firm and widened at every step.

Two of the earliest written references to the fame of this Purgatory and the Pilgrimages to it, are in the *Vita S. Patricii* of the Cistercian, Jocelin of Furness, written about 1183, and in the *Topographia Hibernica* of Giraldus Cambrensis about 1189. These early accounts localize the story in different places and neither mentions Owain, nor the bridge. Cf. Ward, II, 438. As Th. Wright points out, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, Lond., 1844, p. 133: "It appears from Jocelin's account that even so late as the end of the twelfth century, the legend had hardly become fixed in the definite form which Henry's narrative gave to it." An old tradition records that Tiernan O'Rourke, Prince of Breffny, went in 1152 to the Purgatory. O'Connor (*St. Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg*, Dublin, 1895, p. 93), who cites the story, makes the improbable suggestion that the bridge episode of the Owain stories was due to the suggestion of the actual bridge between the Saint's island and the mainland. The great popularity of the Owain story, once it was fairly started, is shown by its early translation into French and English, by its inclusion in the *Chronica Majora* (ed. Luard, Rolls Series, II, 192) of Matthew Paris, and by the great number of early Mss. Cf. Jenkins, p. 45, 85; E. Mall, *Romanische Forschungen*, VI, 149; C. Fritzsche, *Rom. Forsch.*, III, 360; P. Meyer, *Notices et Extraits*, XXXIV, I, 238 (1891); Ward, *Cat. of Rom.*, II, 445. The account of the bridge in the Middle-English versions is much elaborated. Its heights, slipperiness, its sharpness, are dwelt upon. It is highly arched in the middle and is likened to a "bent bowe." A. C. L. Brown, *Iwain, Studies in Phil. and Lit.*, VIII, 124, thinks

added, the still earlier one of Adamnan, the three most famous visions of Irish origin, was such a survival. The visions describe a judgment bridge, varying in size, spanning the abysses of Hell, and crossed only by the dead or the spirit of the mortal to whom the vision was vouchsafed. The concept of the bridge, obviously the same in each case, goes back to the same source, or at least to the same line of tradition. As to what this was, C. S. Boswell, the most authoritative student of the *Fis Adamnáin*,¹⁶ is, perhaps, needlessly dubious when he says:

“It is possible that the author [of the *Fis Adamnáin*] found his immediate prototype in the writings of St. Gregory, with which he was likely to be acquainted; equally possible that the idea was derived from the traditions of the Eastern Church with which it is probable that he had come in contact; or, again, from some floating tradition, originally emanating from either of the above sources.” In another place (p. 112), Boswell speaks definitely of Gregory’s account as “passing on to the Irish school the bridge incident of Oriental myth.”

The concept of the visionary soul bridge undoubtedly came from the East. As it was incorporated, however, as early as the sixth century in ecclesiastical writings of Western Europe, there seems no reason for supposing that the monastic writers who recorded the particular visions mentioned above had recourse to any 'save the Western, and probably the literary tradition. The vision bridge occurs not only in the Dialogues¹⁷ of Gregory the

the description shows traces of Celtic influence as this arched bridge resembles the one crossed by Cuchulinn on his way to Scathach’s abode (*Tochmarc Emere*). An interesting late version of the Owain story is found in the Breton *Mystère, Luis Enius ou Le Purgatoire de S. Patrice*, ed. G. Dottin, Paris, 1911, p. 350. Enius (the Spanish name of Owain) crossed the slippery ice bridge which spanned Hell’s torments. He was aided by an invisible hand. A sweet breeze blew towards him from the celestial palace across the bridge. Cf. the Avesta accounts. Professor G. L. Hamilton draws my attention to L. Fratri, *Tradizioni storiche del Purgatorio di San Patrizio, Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, VIII, 140; XVII, 46.

¹⁶ Ed. Windisch, *Irische Texte*, I: translated by C. S. Boswell, *An Irish Precursor of Dante*, Lond., 1908. For the bridge see p. 39. It was high in the middle, low at each end, it spanned a fiery river. For some who crossed it, it was broad; for others narrow at first, then broad; for still others it was broad at first but presently became so strait that they fell from it perforce into the mouths of fiery serpents. Windisch, *Irische Texte*, I, 167, ascribes the existing version to the tenth, possibly to the ninth century, which latter date is accepted by Zimmer (*Zeitsch. f. deutsch. Alt.*, XXXIII, 285, n. 2. The two Mss. are of the early twelfth and late fourteenth century.

¹⁷ Latin and French texts of the Dialogues, ed. W. Foerster, Erlangen, 1886. In the soldier’s vision no details about the bridge are given. It stretches over

Great but in the *Historia Francorum*¹⁸ of Gregory of Tours; in the eighth century in the vision of the Monk of Wenlock;¹⁹ and most important of all, in the expanded Latin versions of the *Visio S. Pauli*.²⁰ The latter began its great popularity in the ninth century and served more or less as model for the many visions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²¹ This continuous

the river of hell, and the mansion of the blessed is on the other side. Cf. Ward, op. cit., p. 399, and Paris, loc. cit., p. 508. Becker, p. 18, is wrong in saying "the first Christian vision in which we find the bridge is that of St. Paul." Gregory's account is taken over in the *Legenda Aurea*, ed. Th. Graesse, Dresden, 1846, ch. CLXIII, p. 733, *De commemoratione animarum*.

¹⁸ Noted by G. Baist, *Die Totenbrücke*, *Zts. f. rom. Phil.*, XIV, 159. Only one important detail about the bridge is given in this vision of the Abbot Sunniulf, i.e., that it is scarcely the width of a man's foot. The bridge stretches over a burning pool. For the Latin text of Gregory of Tours, see H. Omont, *Historia Francorum*, Lib. IV, c. 33, p. 127, Paris, 1886.

¹⁹ Cited by E. Becker, *Mediaeval Visions of Heaven and Hell*, Baltimore, 1899, p. 17. I have found no other references to this vision. Cf. pp. 17, 44, 76, 85, for discussion of the Visions of St. Paul, Owain and Tundal.

²⁰ The bridge episode does not appear in the fourth century Greek text of the Vision of St. Paul, nor in the Latin of the eighth century (text ed. by M. M. Rhodes in J. A. Robinson's *Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature*, Cambridge, 1893). Of the six groups or redactions into which H. Brandes divided the later versions (*Ein Beitrag zur Visionslit., Diss.*, Halle, 1885, p. 75-80) "die Brücke der gerechten, welche durch ihre lange und ihre schmalheit charakterisiert wird, bleibt unerwähnt in frz. und engl. II" (the numerals refer to the groups); "Lat. und Engl. IV heben hervor dass die erlaubnis des übergangs von dem verdienste der seelen abhängt." (Brandes, *Über die Quellen der mittelengl. Versionen der Paulus Vision, Engl. Stud.*, VII, 58). P. Meyer, *Romania*, XXIV, 359, 589, lists twenty-five Mss. (twelfth to fifteenth century) of this fourth redaction. Only three examples were known to Brandes. Meyer states that his list is still incomplete. Six rhymed French versions are given by him in *Notice sur le ms. français 24862 de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Notices et Extraits des Mss.*, XXXV, 155 ff., cf. *Romania*, XXXVI, 535; Långfors, XLI, 210. Cf. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances*, II, 396-416. T. Batiouchkof, *Le Débat de l'Âme et du Corps, Romania*, XX, 33, cites Italian versions of the *Visio Pauli* in which the soul bridge appears. An interesting example of the soul bridge in art is found in an illumination in Ms. 815, fol. 59, Bibl. Municipale, Toulouse, a fourteenth century Ms. of St. Paul's Vision, written in England. Souls on their hands and knees cross the high, arching bridge. At the other end of the bridge is the gate of Paradise. Cf. P. Meyer, *Romania*, XXIV, 358.

²¹ For general discussion of vision literature see Becker, op. cit. In the list of visions given by C. Fritzsche, *Die lateinischen Visionen des Mittelalter, Rom. Forsch.*, III, 354, one vision of the fifth century, three of the sixth, four of the seventh, one of the eighth, thirteen of the ninth, three of the tenth, three of the eleventh, three to the middle of the twelfth, are listed. The list is incomplete, but suggestive. Representative visions in which the bridge are those already cited; sixth to ninth century, visions recorded by Gregory the Great and Gregory of Tours; Vision of the Monk of Wenlock; Visions of St. Paul, Latin, French, German, English, etc.; tenth century vision of Adamnan, Ireland; vision of Alberic, Italy, 1129; of Tundale, Ireland, 1149; of Owain, Ireland, 1153; of Thurcill, England, 1206. (Cf. Ward, op. cit., 416, 436, 493, 506). For Alberic's vision see Dante's

ecclesiastical tradition, the earliest record of which antedates by three centuries the date which any student has assigned to the *Fis Adamndin*, in its turn the earliest Irish record in which the soul bridge appears, makes it highly improbable that the Irish visionaries were borrowing or adapting the idea of the soul bridge from any surviving pagan lore. The variable Bridge of the Dead, as was briefly pointed out by R. Thurneysen in his *Keltoromanisches*, Halle, 1884, p. 21, occurs solely, so far as Celtic literature is concerned, in ecclesiastical legend. To attempt, even tentatively, to argue as does G. Baist, *Die Todtenbrücke* (*Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, XIV, 159), that the soul bridge, already conceived as a judgment test and thing of vision in the oldest version of the legend in the west, was originally Celtic, "in Urverwandtschaft mit dem Mythos der Zendavest oder ohne solche," that it resulted from the peculiarly Irish concept of the Otherworld as an island, and that it was introduced by Irish pilgrims who are known to have been in France and Gaul in the sixth century, is to venture into unprofitable discussion. There is absolutely no evidence to support a theory that ignores on the one hand the clear implication of literary tradition and on the other the fact that the soul-bridge concept represents a developed eschatological stage to which pagan Irish belief never attained. If ideas—to use the language of a more exact science than folklore—not equivalent to the same thing are *not* to be made equal to each other,—it is necessary to remember that the soul bridge, in even the most primitive myth in which it occurs, is characterized by its visionary quality; its association with the dead and a recognized Otherworld; and, if it is a Bridge of Difficulty, by its function as a judgment test. It is, therefore, much more than the mere idea of a bridge entrance to a land in which marvels

Works, Padua, 1822, II, 284. The bridge was over the river of Purgatory; it was easily crossed by the righteous; the evil were weighted down with heavy loads; when they came to the middle the bridge narrowed to the size of a thread. Before coming to the bridge Alberic saw a long ladder of hot iron, covered with spikes, on which sinners were forced to climb. Becker, *op. cit.*, p. 44, considers this a variant of the bridge theme. Cf. Vision of Tundale, note 14. In the vision of Thurcill (pr. in Roger of Wendover's *Flowers of History*, ed. H. O. Coxe, *Eng. Hist. Soc.*, L, 1841; see C. Gross, *Sources Eng. Hist.*, Lond., 1900, p. 310) the bridge is very long, is covered with nails and spikes, and leads to the mount of joy. Cf. Ward, II, 506. Interesting articles by S. L. Galpin, *PMLA*, XXV, pp. 274-308, and *Romanic Review*, II, 54-60, discuss the influence of mediaeval Christian Vision Literature on French allegorical poems, such as Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de l'Âme* and the second part of the *Roman de la Rose* by Jean de Meun.

occur. The soul bridge, whether it occurs "in the religious legends of cultured races from Vedic India to Iceland, or of such primitive races as the Quoits of Aleutia, the Bagdads of Nilghiris,"²² has recognizable attributes which distinguish it from the bridges in extant old Irish story. To confuse the two types is to blur the essential character of Irish paganism.

In the first place the pagan literature of Ireland, which is untouched by Christian influence, gives us no ground for equating the Irish Land of Promise or Land of the Ever Young with the Land of the Dead, a concept which is clearly discernible in the most ancient Greek mythology and in the religious legends of races much more primitive. The Irish describe an Earthly Paradise, an Elysium divorced from all idea of death,²³—in short, a fairy realm. It lies beyond or beneath the sea, or it is hidden in a mound. In non-Celtic sources there are many parallels for its location. It is distinctive in not being conceived specifically as a region of the dead. Immortals inhabit it; mortals go to it in mortal form and return without too great difficulty,²⁴ and without recognizing it as anything more than a land of spectacular beauty

²² Boswell, *op. cit.*, 132; cf. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Index, Bridge of the Dead, Hades, Purgatory, Underworld, etc. In his *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, ch. XII, he gives a collection of the myths of the Heaven bridge. Cf. *Primitive Culture*, II, 95, n. 1.

²³ The usual names for the Irish Otherworld are: Pleasant Plain (Magh Mell); Land of Promise (Tír Tairngire); Land of the Living (Tír na m Beo); Land of the Youthful (Tír na n-Oc). Cf. L. Gougaud, *Les Chrétientés Celtiques*, Paris, 1911, p. 25: "Ce [i.e., Magh Mell] n'est pas là, un séjour pour les morts, comparable à l'Hades des Grecs. C'est le pays des dieux, des fées, des immortels." Cf. also J. A. MacCulloch, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. J. Hastings, Edin., 1909, II, 689-96; E. Hull, "The Idea of Hades in Irish Literature," *Folk-Lore*, XVIII (1907), 123-66. She denies that in Irish pagan tradition there is any trace of a belief in life after death. A. Nutt, *ibid.*, p. 445 ff. Nutt in this article maintains Miss Hull's point, and replies to D'Arbois de Jubainville, who disputed it. The philological side of the question is represented by endeavors to interpret the name Meléaguant, or Melvas. F. Lot, *Romania*, XXIV, 328, takes it to mean "Prince of the Dead" (Maelvas, Mael, prince; Vas = "bas qui en gallois ancien signifiait mort tout comme en Irlandais"). Lot, however, admits that Rhys's interpretation is entirely satisfactory. Cf. Rhys, *Arthurian Legend*, p. 51, Melwas = Maelgwas. (Mael-gwas = prince-youth = the Prince Ever Young). For general comment and studies on the Irish Otherworld cf. G. Kittredge, *American Journal of Philology*, VII, 196 ff.

²⁴ Cf. the stories cited in note 2. In each case the hero returns to earth. In *Echtra Cormaic i Tir Tairngiri*, Windisch, *Irische Texte*, III, 212, Cormac returns with his whole family from the realm of the god Mannanan; Cuchullin returns from that of the goddess Fand. *Serglige Conchulaind*, *Ir. Texte*, I, 197. In the *Imrama* tales, as in many of the fairy mistress type, the hero returns to tell his adventures. Summaries of *Bran*, *Maelduin*, etc., in Brown, *Iwain*, ch. III.

and pleasure. The taboo against touching earth is by no means inevitably imposed on the returning Irish hero. He who had achieved the adventure in his own body and largely by means of his own initiative bears no resemblance to those bodiless spirits which in non-Celtic folk-lore enter by way of death or dream or magic into a world recognized as other than mortal.

In the second place, though strange and sometimes perilous bridges do lead to the Irish Otherworld,²⁵ their attributes are

²⁵ The oldest redaction of the *Tochmarc Emire* is represented by Ms. Rawlinson B. 512, Bodleian; cf. *Revue Celtique*, XI, 439. The account from the Book of Fermoy, *Do Foglaím Chonculain*, *Revue Celtique*, XXIX, 137, is as follows:

"Thus was the Bridge of Leaps . . . when one leapt upon it, it was narrowed till it was as narrow as a hair, and it was as sharp as a blade-edge, and as slippery as an eel's tail. At another time it would rise so that it was as high as a mast." On p. 137 the comparison "sharp as an orrdladh" is made. Stokes, Notes, p. 151, queries "some sort of a sharp instrument? cognate with *oirdeach*, a cutting (cf. ord-leg)." For the LU version see Hull, *Cuchullin*, p. 75. The following list of bridges in Irish story is not complete, but it is, perhaps, sufficiently representative.

Tochmarc Emire, E. Hull, *Cuchullin Saga*, p. 75; Scathach's bridge described above; a second bridge is mentioned later, the Téd Chlis ("something like a tight rope for dancers," O'Curry, *Manners and Customs*, II, 371). To walk this and fight on it twice with savage opponents was even more of a feat for Cuchullin than crossing the "active" bridge.

Imram Maeleuin, *Revue Celt.*, IX, 447-495; X, 50-95. On the seventeenth island Maelduin finds a bridge of glass; when anyone stepped on it, he fell backwards. A brazen door which gave access to the fortress beyond the bridge made sleep-compelling music.

Compert Mongain, tr. K. Meyer, *Voyage of Bran*, Lond., 1895. Mongan builds a bridge by enchantment while he is on his way to visit the wife he has lost. He causes it to break when he and the priest who acted as the wife's guardian were half way over.

Echtra Airt, ed. R. Best, *Eriu*, III, 149; cf. summary in Boswell, p. 139. In the course of his adventures Art has to cross a narrow bridge over an icy river. The bridge is defended by a giant.

Echtra Cloinne Righ na h-Iorruaidhe, Irish Texts, 1899, p. 180. Buinne Rough Strong comes to a bridge between two islands; corpses lie on the shores, spiked heads border the bridge. (For this detail, heads on spikes, see Child's *Ballads*, V, 482; Schofield, *Studies and Notes in Phil. and Lit.*, IV, 175 ff.; Brown, *Iwain*, 137).

In a modern Gaelic tale recorded by Campbell, *Tales of the West Highlands*, I, 261, the giantess Maol, when pursued to the edge of a river, pulls a hair out of her head and thus makes a bridge over which she runs. Superficially this suggests the *pont cheveu* (Paris, *Romania*, XII, 509), but it has no more real connection with that idea than has the account of the sun or moonbeam bridge up which in the ballad of "The Bitter Withy" the little Christ led his companions. In his study of the ballad, G. H. Gerould, *PMLA*, XVI, thinks this idea Oriental in origin, that it early slipped into ecclesiastical legend, and so reached the common people from whom the ballad came. Gerould notes, p. 144, that the word "lance" is substituted for bridge in one inedited version. The substitution seems purely fortuitous.

A story which scholars have generally held to be of originally Celtic character

wholly different from those of the soul bridge. This fact, however, has not been recognized by those who have been willing to accept a single instance in pagan Irish story as proof of their theory that the soul bridge idea is of universal occurrence. This instance is the "Bridge of Leaps" in the *Tochmarc Emire*, a famous Irish story of which there are extant several versions. In the oldest version, the only representative of a pre-Norse redaction, the bridge is omitted altogether. The version of this story, which is usually cited with reference to the bridge, seems to be that of the Book of Fermoy,²⁵ a late manuscript of the fifteenth century. If one turns to the older text in the *Lebor na h-Uidre* (compiled about 1100) it would seem that the basis for the identification with the soul bridge of this "Bridge of Leaps" which the hero Cuchullin crossed on his way to Scathach's realm, is that it gave access to a seeming Otherworld. Without this suggestion of environment or the aid of the Book of Fermoy, it is doubtful if even the most ardent folklorist would see resemblance between the two. Scathach's bridge was a high arch so constructed that it overthrew anyone setting foot on one end. After two failures Cuchullin had to cross it by one of his "hero's salmon leaps," and one cannot help suspecting that the bridge of such peculiar char-

is that recorded by Antoine de la Sale in *La Salade*, a work written between 1438-1442 (ed. W. Söderhjelm, *Antoine de la Sale et la Légende de Tannhäuser*, in *Memoires de la Société Néo-Philologique à Helsingfors*, 1907, II, 101-67). De la Sale heard the tale on a visit to the Mont de la Sibylle, one of the Apennine peaks near Norcia. The story told him by the peasants was as follows: Whoever entered the cave had to encounter a mighty blast of wind, cross a bridge one foot wide that spanned a brawling torrent and was guarded at one end by two monsters, and also pass through two metal doors that swung back and forth unceasingly, before he came to a large crystal door which led into a beautiful castle. Here in the fairy Otherworld lived the Queen Sibyle. (Quoted from L. Paton, *Fairy Mythology*, p. 53). Substantially the same story, i.e., of the knight who gets into the mountain cave, lives the Life of Otherworld delights, repents, etc., is told by Andrea da Barberino, *Guerino il Meschino*, written 1391 (ed. Venice, 1816, IV, cap. 134; V, cap. 149). The localization of the mountain Paradise in the many tales and allusions analogous to those just cited, and their bearing on the origin of the Tannhäuser legend, are discussed by G. Paris, "Le Paradis de la Reine Sibylle," *Revue de Paris*, September, 1897; "La Légende du Tannhäuser," March, 1898, reprinted in *Légendes du Moyen-Age*, Paris, 1903, pp. 65-109; III, 145; W. A. Neilson, *Origins of the Court of Love, Studies and Notes in Phil. and Lit.*, VI, 133-35; H. Dübi, *Drei Spätmittelalterliche Legenden in ihrer Wanderung aus Italien durch die Schweiz nach Deutschland, Frau Vrene und der Tannhäuser*, *Zeitschr. des Vereins für Volkskunde*, XVII, 249-264 (1907), a reference for which I am indebted to Professor Hamilton; P. S. Barto, *Studies in the Tannhäuser Legend*, *Journal of Engl. and Ger. Phil.*, IX, 293-320 (1910); A. F. Remy, *The Origin of the Tannhäuser Legend*, *ibid.*, XII, 32-77 (1913).

acteristics exists in the story mainly for the sake of the famous feat. In so far as it is a bridge spanning the water which in almost universal folk-lore separates Earth from the Otherworld,²⁶ Scathach's bridge may, indeed, represent the Celtic version of that most ancient concept. To press the analogy further, however, is to venture on dangerous ground. One has need to remember that the *Tochmarc Emire*, though one of the oldest Irish sagas, probably represents, in relation to its original mythic elements, a stage comparatively late. In the Irish stories wherein the Otherworld is apparently discernible, aside from supernaturally exaggerated marvels and pleasures, there is as little real recognition of its essential character as there is in those Arthurian romances in which continually the knights go to and return from a land "dont nul ne retourne." If Scathach's bridge is to represent a Celtic version of the soul bridge of the *Avesta*, then obviously at the time when the *Tochmarc Emire* was composed, it had lost its original significance as the judgment test of the dead. There is little weight in the argument that it would ever develop into that character which in the earliest record of it in Irish legend it would seem to have discarded.

Finally it may be urged that to try to derive the soul bridge concept as it exists in western religious tradition from the Irish fairy bridge is to ignore the fact that the most distinctive feature of the soul bridge, its function as a judgment test, is entirely foreign to the ancient Celtic spirit or belief. One of the most striking things in Old Irish story is its non-ethical quality.²⁷ Ideals of warrior honour, of heroic courage may be inferred from it, but concepts of objective morality, of retributive justice, are conspicuously absent. For his beauty or the fame of his courage the Irish hero was summoned to the Otherworld, and there is no indication that "Magh Mell" was considered the special reward of moral or even of military virtue.²⁸

²⁶ Cf. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Index, River of Death; A. Le Braz, G. Dottin, *Le Légende de la Mort*, Paris, 1912.

²⁷ "L'eschatologie irlandaise est dénuée de toute signification éthique." L. Marillier, *La Doctrine de la Reincarnation des Ames et les Dieux de l'Ancienne Irlande*, *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, XL, 1899, pp. 86-90; Dom L. Gougaud, *Les Chrétientés Celtiques*, p. 24 ff.

²⁸ Cf. the Valhal, which was the reward of the heroic Scandinavian warrior. It is significant that in the most essential feature of pagan Irish tradition, the belief in reincarnations, "there is no to be traced the slightest idea of chastisement or reward"; Nutt, *The Celtic Doctrine of Rebirth*, Lond., 1897. Cf. *Voyage of Bran*, I, 331.

By its function then, or rather its lack of function, no less than by its form, the Irish Otherworld bridge should be differentiated from the Bridge of the Dead. To identify the two is to disregard the essential attributes of each. Yet scholars have commonly made this identification, and have disputed only as to the pagan or Christian origin of the Otherworld bridge in Irish story. Some have agreed with Thurneysen²⁹ that the soul bridge idea passed directly from ecclesiastical literature into the Irish visions; others have urged that "Scathach's bridge is a variant of the well-known 'Bridge of the Dead' motif"³⁰ of general folk-lore. The danger of disregarding the essential attributes of the soul bridge is evident when it appears that even the bridge in the *Imram Maeleduin* (see n. 25) has been said to represent "that Bridge of Difficulty which belongs in Persian and Indian mythology." It will be remembered that this was a judgment bridge, terrible and merciless to the souls of sinners; the sole danger in *Maeleduin* is that the man crossing the glass bridge to the enchanted island against the will of its fairy mistress, falls gently backward and is lulled to sleep by sweet music—an effective but scarcely dangerous obstacle. The result of the misapprehension of the nature of the soul bridge and the failure to differentiate it from a fairy bridge is, of course, responsible for the identification with it of Chrétien's sword bridge, a conclusion for which Gaston Paris offered almost the only significant evidence. This was a passage from the Dutch *Walewein* which seems to show that mediaeval writers themselves identified the bridges. Paris's own summary of the incident (*loc. cit.*, p. 509) may be quoted.

"Gauvain (Walewein) arrive près d'une rivière dont l'eau . . . brûle comme du feu; le seul moyen de la passer est un pont plus aigu et plus tranchant qu'une lame d'acier (v. 4939 ss.). On lui apprend que cette rivière est le purgatoire: les âmes qui désirent arriver au bonheur céleste doivent passer le pont (v. 5824)." From this Paris con-

²⁹ Thurneysen's view that the soul bridge passed from ecclesiastical into secular Irish story has been accepted by several scholars. Cf. G. Schiavo, *Zeits. f. rom. Phil.*, XVII, 74, and W. Foerster, *Der Karrenritter*, p. lxxi. Neither one questions the identification of the sword and the soul bridge. Foerster explains Chrétien's invention as follows: "Das Entführungsmotiv verbunden mit dem Totenreichmotiv ist aber ein Stoff der altklassischen Sage, die, im Mittelalter allgemein bekannt war. . . . Burgen, die im Flachland mit Wasser umgeben waren, sind zu abgedroschen; so konnte er auf die sagenhafte Brücke, die über den Totenfluss führt, und die er aus seiner Lektür kannte, gebracht werden."

³⁰ A. C. L. Brown, *Iwain*, p. 75; Boswell, *op. cit.*, see below, n. 33; E. Hull, *Text-Book of Irish Literature*, Lond., 1910, p. 134.

cludes: "On voit ici clairement l'altération chrétienne d'une ancienne tradition celtique, d'après laquelle 'le pont de l'épée' donnait accès à la terre des morts."

Even if there were evidence in support of the supposed tradition, such an explanation as this completely disregards the conditions under which a romance like the *Walewein* was written. The *Walewein* and the *Perlesvaus* represent a time when monastic writers were more or less consciously competing with romantic fiction;³¹ they reveal the deliberate effort to transform secular into ecclesiastical romance. In the case of the perilous bridge, for instance, the interest of Chrétien's episode is entirely changed. To cross the sword is no longer a romantic achievement, inspired by love, "si li estoit a soffrir douz"; it is a religious adventure. As one notes the immense development of vision writing in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in itself one of the most important phases of the church's competition with worldly literature; as one notes the constant tendency to elaborate the originally simple idea of the soul bridge (cf. notes 14-18) so that it became one of the most familiar *motifs* of vision writing; it is impossible not to see in such romances as the *Walewein* or the *Perlesvaus* the direct influence of this strongly rejuvenated church legend. For one who was familiar with the visions, and who was set to the task of rewriting romance, Chrétien's bridge leading to a mysterious realm from which no one returned, over a dark river which the poet in what is almost a stock expression described as "come li fluns al diable," there was but one natural equation to make, and the perilous sword became the bridge spanning the terrors of hell.

The writers of these and other allegorical pieces represent, chronologically and spiritually, a later stage, and they do not,

³¹ This is so obvious a fact in the literary history of the time that it scarcely needs illustration. One may recall, however, the words of Frère Angier written in 1212 (*La Vie de St. Grégoire*, ed. P. Meyer, *Romania*, XII, 147):

"Les fables d'Arthur de Bretagne
E les chançons de Charlemaigne
Plus sont cheries e meins viles
Que ne soient les evangiles.
Plus est escouté li jugliere
Qe ne soit saint Pol ou saint Piere."

Cf. also the Prologue of the *Bestiaire* of Gervaise, *Romania*, I, 426, for the indication it gives of the attitude of the "religious" toward secular literature. The Middle English *Cursor Mundi*, 1320, in its opening lines almost repeats the words of Frère Angier.

therefore, explain Chrétien's invention. If his description be taken, as it commonly is, to represent the outcome of those processes by which the Celtic Land of Marvel acquired some of the attributes of the Christian Paradise,³² and those by which it was rationalized into stories of fairy realms like Méléagant's, it would seem possible that the bridge, long since a fabled attribute of Paradise, might enter into the story. It is clear, however, that Chrétien's bridge is totally unlike any form of the soul bridge to which allusion has yet been made; it is much more nearly like the fairy bridges of old Irish story which are listed here in note 25. These were crossed by mortals as was Chrétien's, and served simply as the marvellous entrances to a marvellous land. The sword bridge, moreover, plays an integral part in Chrétien's narrative. For even the great lover Lancelot, to cross the bridge is a supreme feat of love, and there is no adequate reason for believing that the most essential element in the passionate adventure that is so realistically described, is to be derived from an utterly unrelated idea drifting out of the vague, confused concept of a Christianized Otherworld.³³

A word may now be said of the Perilous Passage *motif* of

³² The various stages by which the pagan concept of the Irish Otherworld was blended with that of the Christian Paradise were clearly traced by H. Zimmer, *Zts. f. deutsches Alterthum*, XXXIII, 274 ff. Cf. Brown, *Iwain*, ch. VI, "The Otherworld Landscape."

³³ The marvellous, fantastic nature of the "Bridge of Difficulty" in such versions as the *Tochmarc Emire* is Boswell's reason for discounting Miss Hull's suggestion (*Cuhullin Saga*, p. 75) that the idea came into the Irish stories through Scandinavian influence. In the *Edda* Hermôdhr goes to seek the soul of the dead Balder. Coming to the river Giöll, he crosses its golden bridge. The maiden who guards it questions him, knowing that he can not be of the dead because the bridge rings beneath him. In the Otherworld journeys recounted by Saxo Grammaticus in his *Danish History* (written 1185-1208, ed. O. Elton, Lond., 1894, p. 346, 38), Thorkill guides Gorm Haraldson, the king's son, to the Land of the Giants. On their way to the court of the giants' king, they see a river crossed by a bridge of gold. Their guide does not permit them to cross it because "by the river Nature divided the world of men from the world of monsters, and no mortal track might go further." In the story of Hadding a woman leads the king through a mist to the Underworld. They pass a river of leaden, tumbling waters, whirling divers sorts of missiles. It is crossed by a bridge. Beyond are the fighting armies of all men who have been slain by the sword. Unmistakably in each story the bridge is a soul bridge. The idea of retribution does not appear, but each story does represent that belief in the dead, that sense of separation from the living, which we do not find in Irish pagan literature. The more primitive character of the Irish Otherworld bridge is beyond question. Cf. Meyer, *Voyage of Bran*, I, 297, for summary of the *Erik Saga*, in which there is also an Otherworld journey and the crossing of a bridge over a river that bounds the Land of the Living.

Celtic story. It has been shown that whatever may be its remote connection with the Otherworld bridge of general folk-lore, it does not present in the extant remains of old Irish story, any real analogy to the soul bridge into which that concept so commonly developed. The Irish bridges are of fabulous nature,—of glass; bright,³⁴ as Chrétien's was white; they are active; they turn themselves, they overthrow those setting foot on them. They are associated not with death and judgment, but with heroic adventure. The Irish hero exults in the strange ford or pass or bridge where his powers are tested. It is, perhaps, characteristic of Celtic story that in general it is the marvel, rather than the peril of such places, which is emphasized. As a Perilous Passage, the sword bridge, however amazingly elongated and strangely used, has little real analogy with the much more incredible marvels of Celtic story. Moreover, the form, the realistic quality of an actual sword used as a bridge, and its connection with the romantic episode of Guinevere's rescue, remain unexplained. To the writer's mind these are primary conditions in explaining the nature of the sword bridge. Granting them, it becomes possible to see in Chrétien's description simply the reflection of an idea inherent in the narrative and structurally necessary to it.

It has come to be generally recognized that in *Le Conte de la Charette*, Chrétien made use of Celtic sources, particularly of that type of story in which a fairy woman is carried away by an Otherworld lover or husband to his kingdom. Various scholars³⁵ have traced the steps by which Queen Guinevere descends from the fées, the Etains of Celtic story, and have shown how it came to pass that her mortal husband, Arthur, changed places with her

³⁴ A. C. L. Brown in his article on "The Bleeding Lance," *PMLA*, XXV, 32, as well as in an article in *Modern Philology*, I, 101, urges that whiteness or shining in some marvellous object such as the Grail lance or Arthur's weapons (described in *Kulhwch and Olwen*), the names of which usually suggest whiteness, is an indication that the object "has passed through the crucible of Celtic fancy." This may be, but the danger of insisting that "this quality of shining is so exclusively Celtic that it goes far by itself to prove Celtic origin" is pointed out by R. Peebles in her dissertation, *The Legend of Longinus*, Baltimore, 1911, 179. She gives numerous instances from saint legends, etc., of a distinctly non-Celtic character, in which this special attribute is made much of. Cf. Brown, *Romanic Review*, III, 158.

³⁵ Cf. Paris, *Romania*, XII, p. 509; G. Kittredge, *American Journal of Philology*, VII, 176; K. G. T. Webster, *Engl. Stud.*, XXXVI, 340; G. Schoepperle, *Tristan and Isolt, A Study of the Sources of the Romance*, Frankfurt a. Main, 1913, ch. VI and Appendix V, where the most important contributions to the study and the sources of the story of Guinevere's abduction are listed.

lover Lancelot. Back of that lost French *conte* which was presumably the source of Ulrich van Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet* and probably preceded Chrétien's poem by some years;³⁶ back of the *Vita Gildae*, written about 1145, in which it is Arthur himself who rescues Guinevere,³⁷ there must have been tales much more primitive. As Gaston Paris writes (*loc. cit.*, p. 511):

“C'était donc Arthur qui, pour délivrer sa femme, la belle Guanhavar, . . . franchissait toutes les barrières . . . , passait, sur le redoutable pont de l'épée, le fleuve de feu . . . , combattait et terrassait le ravisseur, et ramenait triomphalement son épouse. Arthur lui-même s'était sans doute substitué à quelque roi plus ancien, et cette héroïque et formidable aventure, . . . était peut-être chantée en Bretagne et en Gaule, sous d'autres noms, avant que César eût franchi les limites de la province et commencé la destruction, destinée à ne plus s'arrêter, de la civilisation gallo-bretonne.”

Little indeed of that “épopée mythologique” does Chrétien's poem preserve, but if it be granted that as a whole the story represents the chivalric modification of a pagan Celtic story, then the crossing of the sword bridge is presumably of equally primitive character. If it be taken as one of those feats for which the Irish heroes were famous, feats which made Cuchullin worthy of Emer and loved by the goddess Fand, we need not infuse into the story elements which originally had no place there.

As O'Curry (*Manners and Customs*, II, 372) long ago pointed out, feats (Faebhar-chleas) with edged weapons such as knives, swords, or sharp edged shields were one of the three varieties of feats of championship which distinguished the heroes of Emain. In the *Do Fogluim Chonculainn* (*Rev. Celt.*, XXIX, 125, 129) it is told how Cuchullin works his way “cunningly, lightly, over the darts set up against him.” In the *Siabur Charpat Conculaind* (Hull, *Cuchullin Saga*, p. 279), among the twenty-seven hero's feats, is listed the edge-feat, and the straightening of the body on the point of a spear. The edge feat is again referred to in the *Tochmarc Emire* (*ibid.*, p. 59). the edge-feat in fact was one for which Cuchullin was as famous as he was for his rope-feat and his “hero's salmon leap.” Though these feats are not described in detail in any of the old texts, there is no mistaking their

³⁶ Cf. Webster, *Eng. Stud.*, XXXVI, 348; G. Paris, *La Littérature Française au Moyen Age*, p. 247.

³⁷ F. Lot, *Romania*, XXVII, 566; Zimmer, *Zts. f. fr. Spr. u. Lit.*, XII, 248.

general character, and this general impression is corroborated by a passage which occurs in a late text. The story is that of *Diarmid and Grainne*, in itself one of the oldest of the Irish legends. Diarmid, who is eloping³⁸ with Grainne, appears before the pursuers sent by Finn, Grainne's husband, in order to distract and delay them. He does various feats on successive days.

"On one day the young hero rose and took with him to the hill two forked poles out of the next wood, and placed them upright; and the Moralltach (great and fierce one), that is the sword of Aonghus an Bhroga, between the two forked poles upon its edge. Then he himself rose exceedingly lightly over it and thrice measured the sword by paces from the hilt to the point, and he came down and asked if there was a man of them to do that feat."

Two of Finn's champions attempt the feat, but they are cut in two by the terrible sword.

It is not necessary to use this passage as more than illustration. There can be no question that feats of this kind were a favorite practice in Irish heroic life, as they were a favorite topic in ancient Irish legend. Their persistence in the more or less rationalized Irish tales that have come down to us is ample proof. They are in fact as characteristic a motif as is that of the fairy mistress. Inevitably the two motifs would be associated; and it is not surprising that their influence is perceptible in mediaeval romance. The arched active bridge which Cuchullin crossed on his way to Scathach's realm is paralleled, as has been pointed out, by the similar bridge in the *Perceval*.³⁹ The latter is supposed to have been left in its strange state by a fairy in commemoration of her dead lover. Doubtless in some earlier version the bridge was crossed by that lover by means of some such feat of jumping as Cuchullin was called on to perform, an exploit impossible for the knightly *Perceval*, and therefore omitted in the later story. The sword feat lent itself more readily to adaptation in the semi-rationalized sources which Chrétien must have used, and

³⁸ "An allusion in the Book of Aicill, a law tract of the tenth century, shows that already at that time the story of the elopement of Diarmid and Grainne was traditional," *Revue Celtique*, XXXIII, 1. This particular exploit of Diarmid with the sword may not, of course, have belonged in the primitive story, but the antiquity of the feat it describes is indisputable.

³⁹ See here, n. 11; also Weston. *Legend of Sir Perceval*, I, 267, who thinks it "most likely that in its original form" the episode of the fairy's bridge "was the subject of an independent *lai*."

in that fact we may find the reason for its reappearance in the courtly romance. Centuries after those Irish pagans who sang of it in Caesar's time, perhaps; centuries in which the fairy Otherworld of their wild yet beautiful legends had taken on the composite, semi-rationalized, semi-Christianized character which it has in Chrétien's account of Méléagant's kingdom, all those details were introduced which seem to make easy the equation of the sword and the soul bridge. But it is significant that, for all Chrétien's courtliness and mediaeval sophistication, the literalness of the primitive exploit remains in his story.

Two allusions in other stories deserve a final word. As each one fails to account for the relation between the bridge and the Lancelot episode, they seem improbable sources for the sword bridge idea. The first one, which to the writer's knowledge has never been cited in this connection, has the merit of offering a close parallel to the incident of a sword used as a bridge to a place that is intended to be an Otherworld kingdom. It is the tale told first, it would seem, by Paul the Deacon in the eighth century in his *De Gestis Langobardorum*. Paul probably heard it at Chalons-sur-Saone, where the story was localized. In brief it is as follows:

The Burgundian king, Guntram, whose capital is at Chalons, goes on a hunting trip. When he happens to be alone with one faithful servant, he is overcome with sleep, and lies down with his head on the servant's knee. Presently a little animal comes from the king's mouth and seeks to cross the stream near by. It is unable to do so until the servant draws his sword and lays it across the stream. The little creature runs across, disappears in a hill, then returns by way of the sword to the king's mouth. The king wakes, tells of a treasure cavern of which he has dreamed, and when the servant in his turn tells of what he has seen, they explore the hill and find there a great treasure. From this the king had a golden canopy made for the shrine of St. Marcellus who was buried in Cabillonum (Chalons). Paul himself saw it there.

In Paul's story the folk-lore element is of an unmistakable kind. The little animal is Guntram's soul, and the sword is literally a soul bridge. J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, Part II, *Taboo*, Lond., 1911, p. 39, 40 and G. Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Ancient Celts*, Glasgow, 1911, p. 82, cite references to Gaelic versions of the story which were told in the last

century at Loch Shin and Durnoch, Scotland. In each version the marvellous character of the treasure cave is made evident.

Paul's account has as long literary history as that of the soul bridge. It appears in several of the great Chronicles which would certainly have formed a part of the Beauvais library to which we know Chrétien had access (cf. *Cliges*)—providing we wish to believe that the sword bridge was Chrétien's own invention. It is retold in the Chronicles of Regino (d. 915), of Aimon (1008), of Sigebertus (1112), etc.⁴⁰

Another suggestion in explanation of the sword bridge is that hazarded by Miss Paton, *Fairy Mythology*, p. 85. She writes:

“The origin of such a bridge as the *pont de l'épée* is perhaps explained by a passage in *Kulhwch and Olwen* which mentions the magic dagger of Berwyn. ‘When Arthur and his hosts came before a torrent, they would seek for a narrow place where they might pass the water, and would lay the sheathed dagger across the torrent, and it would form a bridge sufficient for the armies of the three Islands of Britain . . .’”⁴¹

The difficulty of believing that this one waif of the primitive Welsh story was adopted into an episode in the French tale to which it would otherwise bear not the slightest relation, is enhanced by the character of the dagger itself. It is obviously magical, perhaps mythical, and it may be urged that this very magical quality differentiates the dagger from the sword bridge which, for all its rationalized fairy environment, has something that savours of original realism, of an intention no less straightforward than was Shakespeare's when he made Worcester promise Hotspur an adventure “as full of peril”

“As to o'erwalk a current roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.”

(*I Henry IV*, I, 3, 192)

⁴⁰ See Potthast, *Bibliotheca Historica Medii Aevi* for bibliographical information. The writer hopes shortly to publish a study of this tale, noting especially its adaptation into the French *Gui de Warwyke*.

⁴¹ Miss Paton's quotation is incorrect. Read as follows, changing Berwyn to “Osla Gyllellvawr (who bore a short broad dagger).” *Mabinogion*, tr. Lady Guest, Lond., 1877, p. 226; see also H. Zimmer, *Ztschr. f. frz. Spr.*, XII, 231.

ERKENBALD THE BELGIAN: A STUDY IN MEDIEVAL EXEMPLA OF JUSTICE*

A CURIOUS legend that was said to be still current in Brussels¹ is worthy of note, not only for its brave antiquity and braver spirit, but for the remarkable place it has occupied in art and literature, a place on which there has been comparatively little comment. The legend also gives the clue to some of the problems connected with the Middle English poem, *St. Erkenwald*.

The story in its modern legendary form seems to have been first written down by Maria von Ploennies in a little book, *Die Sagen Belgiens*, published in Cologne in 1846. To it she gave the name "Brüssels Brutus," a title kept in the French translation published two years later by L. Piré, *Légendes et traditions de la Belgique*. These texts are cited as sources in the *Brabantsch Sagenboek*, published in Ghent in 1911 by A. de Cock and I. Teirlinck (Koninklijke Vlaamsche Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde). The editors give two versions of the story: one, which concludes with a miracle of the Host, they group with pious tales; the other with historical legends. In this the date and places are given as follows: "Omstreeks het jaar 1020, tijdens de regeering van Hendrik I, graaf van Leuven, woonde in de oude IJzerstraat (Rue au Fer) te Brussel een arme grijsaard." For this traditional placing of the tale no reason is suggested, nor has a search through the various texts of the *Chroniques Belges*² added anything to the observations made in 1876 by Kinkel (*Mosaik zur Kunstgeschichte*, p. 302), who noted the ancient connection of the hero's name with the house of Bourbon.³ "Schon der fünfte Sire de Bourbon,

* From *Modern Philology*, XVII (1920), 129-38.

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¹ V. Devogel, *Légendes Bruxelloises* (Brussels, 1890), pp. 53 ff.

² *Commission royale d'histoire* (Brussels, 1836-88).

³ Chazaud, *Étude sur la chronologie des sires de Bourbon*, Xe-XIII^e siècles

in dem bis ins zehnte Jahrhundert hinaufgehenden Stammbaum heisst Erkenbald oder französisch Archambault, und dieser Vorname wurde in dem Geschlecht stehend, so dass davon sogar das Städtchen beim Stammschloss zum Unterschied von gleichnamigen Orten den Namen Bourbon l'Archambault erhielt, den es noch heute trägt." Ancient as is the name, however, the earliest extant text associating the legendary tale of Brussels' Brutus with an Erkenwald is the *Dialogus Miraculorum*⁴ of Caesarius of Heisterbach, who was writing about 1222. The story may be briefly summarized as follows:

"Erkenbaldus de Burban, vir nobilis et potens, erat tantus amator iustitiae, ut nullam in iudiciis respiceret personam." Once, while he was gravely ill, he heard an outcry of the people. No one would venture to tell him its cause until at last he forced one of his household to confess that the tumult was caused by the attack upon a maiden made by Erkenbald's own nephew. Deeply moved the old man commanded: "Ite, et suspendite illum." His men pretended to obey, but they feared lest later on their lord might visit on them his regret for the stern command. For some days they hid the young man, but at last Erkenbald beheld him. "Verbis blandis advocans," he enticed the youth to sit upon his bed. Seizing a sword Erkenbald killed him on the spot, to the horror of his attendants. Overcome by sorrow and suffering Erkenbald sent presently for the bishop. To him Erkenbald confessed his sins but said nothing of his nephew's death. To the bishop's reproach Erkenbald answered: "Ego neque peccatum iudico, neque a Deo mihi remitti depono." The bishop thereupon refused to give him the last Sacrament, and turned to leave the room. The old man called him back and asked that he look within the sacred pyx. The box was empty. Then said Erkenbald: "Ecce, quem mihi negastis, ipse se mihi non negavit," and he showed the Host resting on his tongue. "Episcopus vero pavens tantum miraculum ubique divulgavit, per quem etiam quibusdam Abbatibus ordinis nostri innotuit, qui anno praeterito illud in Capitulo generali recitaverunt, cunctis Deum glorificantibus, qui facit mirabilia magna solus."

(Moulins, 1865), lists the Archambauds as follows: Archambaud I, d. 1043; Archambaud II, c. 1078; Archambaud III, d. 1105; Archambaud IV, date of death unknown; Archambaud V, d. 1171."

⁴ Ed. by J. Strange (Cologne, 1851), II, 193; Caesarius, *Distinctio IX*, cap. xxxviii. The various manuscripts give these spellings for the hero's name: Erkenbaldus the Burbon, Burdem, Burbair, Burbay.

The story as Caesarius gives it is gravely told and altogether lacks those livelier touches of characterization in the modern folk versions, such as Erkenbald's valiant "Weg van mij Satan," when he is tempted to mitigate his nephew's punishment, or the young man's plaintive plea, "Ik was drunken," when his uncle asks concerning his guilt. The medieval version was somber, as befitted a story of the sacred miracle for which primarily it was told. Whatever may have been its popularity before or after Caesarius' time, his own words indicate the manner of its diffusion within the Cistercian order, and no one, knowing how medieval exempla passed from one preacher and one order to another, can doubt that this story had the same experience. The probability indeed seems confirmed by the appearance of the tale in the *Alphabetum Narrationum*, which is discussed in a later section, and in the anonymous, mid-fourteenth-century collection from the Dominican convent at Breslau, which was published by J. Keller⁵ in 1914. In this the justice's name was Reynold, the conversations were amplified, but in structure and detail the tale was identical with Caesarius' version.

It is an interesting fact that for some time the history of the legend must be followed chiefly in manuscripts of the *Dialogus*, which was itself one of the most popular of the great medieval collections of exempla,⁶ and is still even today not without contemporary appeal.⁷ *Erkenbaldus* appears in two of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts of the *Dialogus* now owned by the British Museum and also in the Museum's *Additional Manuscript 18364*, an anonymous fourteenth-century collection of exempla, which borrows largely from Caesarius.⁸ In general, however, this strikingly conspicuous miracle of the Host, authenticated as it was by Caesarius' grave citation, seems to have had a limited circulation in exempla collections before the end of the fourteenth century. The three references just given exhaust those which Herbert made to it in his analyses of the eight thousand exempla⁹ listed in his *Catalogue of Romances*, Vol. III.

⁵ *Erzählungen des Mittelalters in deutscher Übersetzung u. lateinischem Urtext* (Breslau, 1914), No. 134. Cf. Crane's review, *Romanic Review*, VI, 235, note.

⁶ Dr. Michael Ott, *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, calls the *Dialogus* the most popular book of medieval Germany. Cf. A. Kaufmann, *Caesarius von Heisterbach* (Cologne, 1862); J. A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances*, III, 348 ff.

⁷ Cf. the recent modern German translation by E. Müller-Holm (Berlin, 1910), *Erkenbald legend*, p. 193.

⁸ Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances*, III, 363, 367, 613.

⁹ Cf. Crane, *Modern Philology*, X, 301.

In the fifteenth century through the art of Roger van der Weyden the legend of Erkenbald became famous.¹⁰ In a minor way, however, its history may still be followed in this century and the next, in collections of exempla. It is the thirty-eighth exemplum (*Iudex Justus*) in the *Promptuarium exemplorum*, written before 1418 by John Herolt,¹¹ the Dominican prior of Nuremberg. The name Erkenbald, though not given in the title or at the beginning, occurs in the middle of the story and the author definitely refers to Caesarius as his source. The story is also found in considerably abbreviated form and under the heading *De Pudicitia* in the extraordinary compilation *De dictis factisque memorabilibus* made by the Italian scholar and sometime Doge, Baptista Fulgosus (Fregoso), about 1509. This collection, originally written in Italian, was speedily translated into Latin by Camillo Ghilini¹² and in this form was edited in the ponderous *Liber Virtutum et Vitiorum* (Basel, 1555) of Johannis Basilius Herold,¹³ a German scholar living at Basel.

The cause for the comparative rarity of medieval versions of Erkenbald is an interesting subject for speculation. The vitality which has made it survive to the present day should have been as potent then as now. That it was not, at least so far as more or less ecclesiastical texts show, is probably to be explained by the fact that for all the essentially pietistic emphasis given to it by Caesarius and others its most trenchant meaning was for justice and not for religion. Almost unquestionably this accounts for Roger van der Weyden's choice of it when about 1436 he was ordered to decorate the wall of the great town hall at Brussels. To suit the proud and wealthy burghers of his day, to attract an attention already modern in its interests, in its zest for life and the problems of a people tumultuous with vigor and dreams of freedom, the artist had to turn from devoutly traditional themes of painting and find a subject voicing a democratic and not a religious idealism. The difficulty of such a search is suggested by the fact that among the hundreds and thousands of stories with which

¹⁰ Cf. Kinkel, op. cit., pp. 337 ff. Also P. Lafond, *Roger van der Weyden* (Brussels, 1912), pp. 28-30.

¹¹ Herbert, *Catalogue*, III, 452; Crane, "Medieval Sermon Books," *American Philosophical Association Proceedings*, XXI (1883).

¹² Boccardo, *Nuova Encyclopedia Italiana* (Turin, 1880). See Fregoso or Cam-pofregoso.

¹³ Firmin Didot, *Nouvelle biographie générale* (1861); Mosher, *The Exemplum in England* (New York, 1911), p. 18.

medieval preachers had made their people familiar there were almost none which dealt with the theme of earthly justice. Feudal injustice was too rife, the Church itself too insistent on aristocratic privilege, for its members to preach of a law irrespective of place or power. A good illustration may be found in the famous *Alphabetum Narrationum* once ascribed to Etienne de Besançon, but now believed to have been written by Arnold of Liège¹⁴ about 1308. This great alphabetical collection of 802 tales had only five stories in which the justice theme was essentially involved. Three of them concerned personages of classical times: King Cambyses,¹⁵ who had an unjust judge flayed alive and made his son and successor sit on a judgment seat covered with his father's skin; Zaleucus,¹⁶ the Locrian lawgiver, who doomed his own son to blindness but gave one of his own eyes for one of his son's; and, most famous of all, Trajan,¹⁷ who halted his whole army to do justice to a poor widow woman; the fourth tale was of a pious bishop rebuked for not wishing to do justice on a holy day; and the fifth was our legend of Erkenbald. This last tale and that of Trajan were the only ones under the actual heading *Justicia*, and the association there is significant, for it may have been some text of the *Alphabetum* which determined Roger to emblazon the walls of the town hall with the legend of the noble Roman and the no less noble Belgian.

From this period the history of the story belongs to the fine arts rather than to literature. The studies¹⁸ devoted to the Trajan legend and to the work of Roger van der Weyden have gathered

¹⁴ Herbert, *The Library* (1905); Catalogue, III, 423.

¹⁵ From Herodotus v. 25, followed by Valerius Maximus vi. 3; *Gesta Romanorum*, etc. Cf. Herbert, *Catalogue*, III, 232, 417. This story had a notable revival in the sixteenth century. See Latimer's *Sermon*. Preston's *Cambises* (1569-70), and Shakespeare's jocose reference, *I Henry IV*, II, 4.

¹⁶ From Valerius Maximus vi. 5. 3. See Oesterley's *Gesta*, Index; Herbert, *Catalogue*, III, 206, 231, 238, etc.

¹⁷ Gaston Paris, "La Légende de Trajan," *Bibl. de l'Ecole des Hautes Études* (1878); Graf, *Roma nella memoria—del medio evo* (1889), 1 ff. Hulbert (*Modern Philology*, XVI, 488) lists all the references to the Trajan story in Herbert's *Catalogue*, III.

¹⁸ In addition to the references given above in notes 10 and 17, see Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Early Flemish Painters* (London, 1872). W. M. Conway (*Literary Remains of Albrecht Dürer* [Cambridge, 1889], p. 101) thus translates Dürer's own words about his visit to Brussels in 1520: "In the golden chamber in the Townhall at Brussels I saw the four paintings which the great master Roger van der Weyden made." Cf. also A. van Hasselt, "Trois peintres flamands du XV^e siècle," *Bull. de l'Académie de Archéologie* (Anvers, 1849), VI, 127; Fiens-Gevaert, "La Peinture en Belgique," *Les Primitifs Flamands* (1912), I, 37 ff.

together a large number of the descriptive comments made by the artists, scholars, and travelers who from time to time saw these famous paintings. They were there for all the world to see until their destruction in 1695 by the French bombardment of Brussels. But long before this and, indeed, shortly after Roger's completion of his work the paintings had been copied in magnificent tapestries made perhaps at Arras. These first and most famous Erkenbald tapestries passed into the possession of Charles the Bold, were taken by him on his ill-fated expedition against the Swiss in 1476, were captured by them and have since remained in the keeping of the cathedral at Berne.¹⁹ The fame of the paintings and the tapestries undoubtedly inspired other copies, but the writer has happened to note, in addition to the engraving of Heinrich Aldegrever and the tapestry woven in 1513 for the confrérie of the Holy Sacrament of the church of St. Peter at Louvain, which were listed by Lafonde, only the reference to "I pece of riche Arras of King Erkinwalde" among the Tower hangings owned by King Henry VIII.²⁰

The group of exempla on justice and the legend of Erkenbald in particular inevitably bring to mind that strong yet tender Middle English poem which goes under the name of *St. Erkenwald*.²¹ The poem is found in a single fifteenth-century manuscript (Harley 2250) and is generally supposed, on account of its long alliterative lines, to have been composed during the alliterative revival which began about 1350.²² But despite its interest as a member of this group and its own indubitable power, it has been curiously neglected in critical studies. Occasional references to the question of its authorship have been made by scholars involved in the Huchown²³ controversy, but until 1919 no serious study of the nature of the poem had ever been made. In a conclusive article in *Modern Philology*, XVI, Professor Hulbert recognized and proved the essential character of the poem as a

¹⁹ The tapestries are described and reproduced in color by Jubinal, *Les anciennes tapisseries historiées* (Paris, 1838), II, 121. For bibliography on this subject see J. Guiffrey, "La tapisserie," *Bibliothèque de Bibliographies Critiques* (Paris, 1904), Index. Berne.

²⁰ W. G. Thomson, *A History of Tapestry* (New York, 1906), p. 263.

²¹ Horstmann, *Altenglische Legenden* (Heilbronn, 1881), pp. 265 ff. and 527.

²² Wells, *Manual of Writings in Middle English* (1916), p. 310; Gerould, *Saints' Legends* (1916), p. 237.

²³ Neilson, *Huchown of the Awle Ryale* (Glasgow, 1902); Bateson, *Patience* (1912), p. 1, and Bibliography, pp. 71-73. See also Wells, *Manual*, p. 826.

version of the famous story of Trajan and Pope Gregory, whose prayers released from hell the soul of the just emperor. Hulbert, however, still accepted Horstmann's assertion that the immediate source of the poem was the *Miracula Sancti Erkenwaldi*, a twelfth-century Latin text contained in Parker MS 161 of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and this opens the way for a new consideration of the genesis of the legend and its probable date.

In the first place the statement that the Latin text is the source of the Middle English poem can now be authoritatively denied. The librarian of Corpus Christi, Sir Geoffrey Butler, has had the kindness to read the manuscript and finds in it "no mention of nor allusion to" the miracle in question. Neither in this nor in any other known life of St. Erkenwald is the Anglo-Saxon saint associated with the story of the finding in St. Paul's Cathedral of the body of an ancient pagan, sometime justice in New Troy. It is in this episode that the whole interest of the Middle English legend centers and the saint is a background figure. He is brought in for the sake of his christening tears which release the soul of the justice from "þat derke dethe, þer dawes neuer morowen." The story, in truth, offers a capital instance of the forced association of entirely unrelated characters and incidents which is so characteristic of popular narrative, for clearly enough Gregory's famous act of intercession has here been connected in a piously modified form with St. Erkenwald. Since the Corpus Christi MS, which has now been discredited, was the sole reason for believing that this connection had been made as early as the twelfth century, it becomes an open question whether the deliberate efforts made in the fourteenth century for the revival of the Erkenwald cult do not best explain this somewhat obvious literary attempt to enhance the fame and the glory of the saint. It was in this century that the shrine of St. Erkenwald became one of the wonders of St. Paul's, and it was in this period that a monastic writer would have seized most willingly on any suggestion for a new miracle tale concerning Erkenwald.²⁴

One suggestion for this may very possibly have come from

²⁴ The life and cult of the Anglo-Saxon St. Erkenwald are discussed by Stubbs, *Dictionary of Christian Biography*; cf. *Catholic Encycl.* See W. S. Simpson, *Documents Illustrating History of St. Paul's* (Camden Society, 1880), for offices and collects of St. Erkenwald. Simpson's *Chapters in the History of Old St. Paul's* (London, 1881), pp. 89 ff., gives the best description of the shrine, the gifts given to it, etc. In 1339 three goldsmiths were employed to work on it for a year.

an actual happening. In a chance reference, but one of extraordinary interest, John de Bromyard,²⁵ the learned Dominican author of the *Summa Praedicatorum* (1323-80), casually refers to what he evidently considered a well-known incident. "Nota," he wrote, "de iudice cuius caput Londoniis in fundamento ecclesiae Sancti Pauli inuentum fuit."²⁶ The passage precedes a sorrowful indictment of the judges of his own day and occurs in the midst of his discussion of the whole subject of justice, into which he had, of course, introduced the almost inevitable legends of Trajan and the widow, and of Trajan receiving the reward of his justice through the prayers of St. Gregory. If there had been any association made between the finding of this ancient judge and St. Erkenwald at the time at which he wrote, we may be sure that the learned and pious Bromyard would have reported it. His failure to do so strongly suggests that he was simply referring to a rumor which was actually current in ecclesiastical circles in fourteenth-century London and which was based, not at all improbably, upon some actual discovery. St. Paul's was built, as we know, upon the site of an ancient Roman cemetery,²⁷ and in all the building and repairing that went on at this period in the old church it would not be at all surprising if the workmen did actually come upon a Roman sarcophagus and the bones of the Roman dead. Evidence that actual excavation near the shrine of St. Erkenwald sometimes took place for the purpose of sepulture within the church is afforded by the *Annales Londonienses*²⁸ for the year 1314, and had such a find as that recorded by Bromyard been made in that locality we may well believe that it would have been promptly recorded and in course of time associated with the saint. In any case Bromyard's report was itself sufficiently striking and authoritative to have given rise to other accounts, and it is, therefore, of special interest to note that the author of the Middle English poem, in beginning to describe the excavations which

²⁵ See Herbert, *Catalogue*, III, 450-52; Crane, *American Philosophical Society Proceedings*, XXI (1883), 71; Mosher, *The Exemplum in England* (1911), p. 82.

²⁶ Quoted from the edition of 1518 published at Nuremberg, I, 441. For another reference to the same story see II, 243. For facilitating my use of Bromyard's work and other valuable collections of exempla, special thanks are due the librarians of Harvard University.

²⁷ Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's Cathedral* (London, 1658); Milman, *Annals of St. Paul's* (London, 1869), p. 151.

²⁸ *Rolls Series*, ed. Stubbs, I, 230: "Magister Johannes Seintcler, qui feretrum S. Erkenwaldi multum adauxit, obiit, sepultus in pavimento coram praedicto feretro."

led to the finding of the old Roman's body, thus gravely alluded to other accounts of the same wonderful discovery:

as þai mukkyde and mynyde, a mervuayle þai founden,
As zet in crafty cronecles is kydde þe memorie.

If this actual or rumored incident constitutes one step in the development of the Middle English legend, it is possible that the next one lay in the very name of the saint. The fact that this was also the name of the ancient Belgian judge seems to the present writer one of the links in the circumstances that led to the foisting of the wholly apocryphal Trajan-Gregory story upon the old Saxon saint and bishop of London. From the twelfth century the saint's legend, as preserved in various extant Latin texts, was sufficiently familiar to have been known outside England, a fact which may, perhaps, account for a surprising shift of names that took place even in the Belgian homeland of the Erkenbald legend. In the *Alphabetum Narrationum*, already referred to, the story is told of a noble justice named Bormar, who killed his nephew for just cause and sent for Bishop Erkenwaldus to give him absolution.²⁹ The whole story, including the final miracle of the Host, is identical in detail with that told by Caesarius, but it is said to be drawn from an account by Bishop Erkenwaldus himself. Whether the fame of the English saint was or was not the cause for this shift of names, there can be no question that when in its turn the *Alphabetum* became known in England the Bishop Erkenbaldus of this particular tale would have been identified with St. Paul's deeply venerated saint. Though in itself the story added little to his fame, it prepared the way for its own displacement by a still more striking tale of justice and its divine reward.

It may now be recalled that several of the medieval versions of the Trajan-Gregory story, as Hulbert pointed out, began with a curious excavation scene in the course of which Trajan's head was recovered. Some of these versions must have been known in England, else the Middle English *Erkenwald* could not have its present form. To anyone who did know this older story, the rumored discovery of the Roman judge at St. Paul's must have seemed to offer an almost miraculous repetition of the initial events of the Trajan legend. What more natural, then, than to

²⁹ Summarized from the Middle English, fifteenth-century translation, *The Alphabet of Tales* (E.E.T.S. 127 [1905]), II, 287).

imagine that the later events of the story might also have happened, that even as Rome's pagan emperor had been saved by Rome's great bishop, so London's pagan judge might have been saved by London's bishop? That this bishop should have been Erkenwald rather than another seems to have been due probably in some small part to the previous association with him of a justice tale, and in large part to the pre-eminence of his cult at St. Paul's Cathedral.

MALORY'S BOOK OF BALIN*

MALORY'S version of the story of Balin is short, powerful, and complete. For some inexplicable reason it has aroused more interest among poets than among scholars, and not until 1918 was it made the subject of an extensive investigation. *Die Balen-Dichtungen und ihre Quellen* by Dr. Ella Vettermann (*Beihefte zur Zeitsch. f. rom. Phil.*, LX, Halle) is indubitably a work of importance, worthy of much more attention from Arthurian scholars than it has received.¹ Chapter I sets forth the known versions of the Balin story; chapters II and III analyze in detail the poetic versions of Tennyson (1885) and of Swinburne (1896); chapters IV and V deal with Malory's version and his source material in the *Huth Merlin* (*Merl.*, ed. Paris and Ulrich, SATF., 1886); chapters VI, VII and VIII with the Spanish versions in *La Demanda del sancto Grial*, 1515, (*Libros de Caballerias*, VI, ed. A. Bonilla y San Martin, Madrid, 1907) and in *El Baladro del Sabio Merlin con sus profecias*, Burgos, 1498, and the summarizing of results gained from the preceding chapters; chapter VIII takes up the question of origin and of Celtic and French elements; chapter IX the work of the original author of the story, and chapter X its place among the Grail romances.

The purpose of the present study is to discuss Dr. Vettermann's chapter on Malory as a means of directing attention not only to the exact relationship of Malory's version to its source, but to the perpetual problem of Malory's style and originality. Though it has long been such a commonplace of English criticism

* From *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis* (Paris, New York, 1927), pp. 175-195.

¹ Reviewed by R. Zenker, *Archiv f. das Studium d. neueren Sprachen*, CXLI, 150 ff. (1921), a reference pointed out to me by Prof. J. D. Bruce. See also for other dissertations on the Balin story J. Bausenwein, *Die poet. Bearbeitungen der Balin von Tennyson und Swinburne und ihr Verhältnis zu Malory*, 1914; J. Hoops, *Swinburne's Tale of Balin and Malory's Mort d'Arthur*, Festsch. z. XVI Neu-philologentag in Bremen, Heidelberg, 1914.

to acknowledge the charm of Malory's style, especially in the later books, the Tennysonian concept of Malory's essential artlessness is met with surprising frequency. "Quaint," "simple," "naive," "childishly ingenuous," are terms found in even most sympathetic comments on Malory. As regards the Balin story in Malory, the divergence of critical opinion may be suggested by quotations from two recent writers. The first passage is from Dr. Vettermann's book (1918), and the second from Professor V. D. Scudder's, *Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory and Its Sources*, (N. Y. 1917).

"Die englische Übersetzung unterscheidet sich von der französischen Quelle durch zahlreiche, aber meist unbedeutende sachliche Abweichungen (Ergänzungen, Änderungen und Kürzungen), durch weniger gute Charakterisierungen und Motivierung, durch das Fehlen des tragischen Grundzuges, durch den ungemein trockenen Stil." (p. 84).

"From the point of view of romantic art, this book [of Balin] is one of the finest in Malory.—Balin is the first of Malory's strong character studies; a tragic figure, always entirely noble in purpose, always doing the wrong thing.—Balin is "fey."—The scenes, the words, have the same unforgettable quality of weird horror that pervades Browning's *Childe Roland*," (Scudder, p. 195-198).

Mysterious indeed is the human reaction from the same printed page! Professor Scudder writes in the large manner, interpreting the general effect of Malory's work; Dr. Vettermann, with scrupulous care, weighs detail by detail, in the main following the criticisms thrown off by Sommer in his study of the Sources of Malory (*Morte Darthur*, London, 1891, III, 70-97).² Both she and Sommer are agreed that to all intents and purposes the unique thirteenth century Huth MS. represents Malory's immediate source³ and both proceed on the assumption that his divergence from it must be put to his own credit or blame. In theory,

² Sommer (p. 79) remarks: "On the whole Malory faithfully reproduces the account given in the 'Suite' [i.e. the Huth MS]. Now and then he alters slightly, and frequently shortens the French text.—Sometimes, but comparatively rarely, the English is a literal translation of the French text.—Malory dealt with his text more freely than sagaciously, often reproducing events of secondary importance, and, on the other hand, omitting important facts, thereby often rendering his text obscure." The injustice of these remarks will, it is hoped, be made plain in the course of this study.

³ Except for Malory's omissions, the two texts present precisely the same narrative. In many cases Malory literally translates his original. Dr. Vettermann devotes three pages (67-70) to a list of whole sentences that Malory has thus translated, and the list might be greatly increased by the almost innumerable

nothing could be more admirable than Dr. Vettermann's method; in result, at least in the present writer's opinion, nothing could be more utterly wrong.

Dr. Vettermann's fundamental assumption (p. 63, 78) is that because Malory has reduced his story to about one fourth of his original, he has thereby sacrificed much in the way of characterization, motivation, and style. She believes that Malory not only failed in such matters, but that he genuinely failed to understand the nature, the deeper significance of his story. There is a striking quality about the Balin Story; the hero, as he first appears in the Huth *Merlin*, is doomed to altogether unhappy adventures; despite himself he kills a man, and through that man an innocent, too much loving lady; despite his great prowess he is unable to protect knights who seek his safe-guard; despite the gravest warnings he strikes the Dolorous Blow that brings misery on the land; he destroys the man he would have aided, and the brother whom most he loves. Dr. Vettermann does not observe that these most significant episodes in the Huth *Merlin* are mingled with others of an entirely irrelevant character,⁴ but even so it is clear that they do embody the concept of a hero fated for tragic destiny.

The argument that Malory did not apprehend this basic significance of the story rests largely on the fact that he omits specific references to Fate. In the Huth *Merlin* the hero occasionally pauses to look upon himself and bewail his woes (*Merl.*, II, 9, 48, 53). The first passage cited by Dr. Vettermann (p. 79, 82-3), reads as follows:

“Et dist (Balaain) qu'il est li plus chetis et li plus mescheans chevaliers de tous cheus qui onques portaissent armes; car ore

phrases similarly taken from his original. Sommer's idea that literal translation occurs but rarely is unwarranted. After a much more detailed study than his, Dr. Vettermann (p. 63) states: “Malory hat, wenn ihm nicht das *Huth MS.* selbst vorgelegen hat, eine diesem so sehr ähnliche Rezension der Balen-Geschichte benützt dass wir hier unbedenklich die *Huth Hds.* als seine Quelle zugrunde legen können.” In an access of caution both she (p. 62) and Sommer (III, p. 146) suggest that another French manuscript may have been used by Malory though obviously his literal translations prove that this must have been practically identical with the Huth MS. Sommer suggests it on the score of proper names. See below. Dr. Vettermann has no additional basis for her opinion save the general theory derived from study of the Spanish texts, that there must have been more than one Old French text of Balin. That indeed may be granted, but it in no way affects the clear evidence of the actual dependence of Malory's version on the Huth MS.

⁴ See below.

voit il apertement que fortune li est plus contraire et plus anemie que a nul autre houme." (*Merl.*, II, 9).

In another passage he cries out:

"Car sans faille je sui li plus mescheans chevaliers qui soit, si est bien esprouvé" (II, 42).

Even without their context, these passages give a very fair illustration of these supposedly important allusions to Fate. As a matter of fact they are simply windy asseverations, such as might occur in any story of knightly mischance. Their omission on Malory's part is a virtue, not a fault. The sense of Fate in his version depends not upon an outward word, but upon an inner mood and atmosphere, an emphasis, that is wholly and uniquely his own. It is he alone who releases the tragic primary episodes of the story from trivial and unrelated things, who has focussed all the interest on the figure of Balin, and who has enhanced, through details altogether ignored or misinterpreted by Dr. Vettermann, the sense of mystery and of "swift oncoming doom." A close comparison of the scene of climax in the two versions will best prove these contentions.

In the Huth *Merlin* (II, 43) after the suicide of the lover he had tried to save, the hero, who is here known as the "chevaliers a deus espees," meditates for a while on his bad luck, and at last mounts his horse and rides into a pleasant forest where the birds are singing. Malory reduces the three hundred words or so of this passage to twenty-one:

"When Balin saw that, he dressed him thenceward, lest folk would say he had slain them; and so he rode forth." He omits the thirty lines in the French text which record the chevalier's meeting with a squire to whom he tells the story of the dead lovers so that it may be put into writing, and remembered as a "mervilleuse" thing. The French text also sets forth the wonder of the people who found the bodies of the lovers, and of their relief when the squire came by and told them all about it. It is difficult to see anything in this that does not distract attention from the figure of Balin, and the imminence of his own fate.

The French text lingers over the picture of Balaain's riding "comme aventure le portoit," until at last he comes to a river, "forte et rade" where there is a "chastiaus si bien de toutes chose k'en tout le pais n'avoit plus biel ne plus gent. Quant il vint a demie liue priès dou chastiel, il trova une grant chimentiere ou il avoit tombes pluisours vielles et nueves. Au chief del chimen-

tiere par deviers le chastiel avoit une crois toute nueve. En cele crois avoit lettres qui disoient: *Os tu, chevaliers errans qui vas querant aventures? Je te déffenc que tu n'ailles de chi pres dou chastiel. Et sache que elles ne sont mie legieres a un chevalier.* Quant il a leues les lettres, il entent moult bien que elles dient, a che que il estoit bien lettrés. Et lors commenche a regarder le chastiel, se li samble moult biel. Et maintenant dist a soi meismes que ja Dieus ne li ait s'il retourne devant qu'il ait veut le chastiel par dedens. 'Et, certes,' fait il, 'a couart et a malvais me deveroit (on) tenir, se je retornoie pour parole que je voie escrite.' Lors se met outre la crois et s'en vait grant oirre viers le chastiel. Et lors n'a gaires alé quant il rencontre un vavasour viel et anchien, tout mellé de chainne(s), qui li dist, si tost comme il vint près de lui: 'Sire chevaliers, vous avés passé les bonnes; il n'i a mais riens del retourner,' 'Encore,' fait il, 'irai jou outre.' . . . Ensi dist li prodrom.—Et quant che fu chose qu'il vint près dou chastiel a trois archies, lors escoute et ot en la maistre forterech de laiens un cor souner a grant alainne, aussi comme che fust de prise de cierf ou de porc sauvage. Et quant il entent, il commenche a sourire et dist a soi meismes: 'Qu'es che? Me tiennent il a pris, qui cornent de prise?'"

In Malory all this is reduced to the few lines that follow: "And so he rode forth, and within three days he came by a cross, and thereon were letters of gold written, that said, It is not for no knight alone to ride toward this castle. Then saw he an old hoar gentleman coming toward him, that said, Balin, le Savage, thou passest thy bounds to come this way, therefore turn again and it will avail thee. And he vanished away anon; and so he heard an horn blow as it had been the death of a beast. That blast, said Balin, is blown for me, for I am the prise and yet am I not dead."

Does this forceful condensation lose anything of essential detail? Obviously no. Yet condensed as it is, it has space for certain effective touches of Malory's own. The inscription on the cross is the only thing in the whole scene described by the French author which is essential to the dramatic situation. Malory emphasizes it by saying its letters were of gold, and in making it a blunt, stern prohibition. He adds the touch of mystery in the vanishing away of the old hoar man that makes him known as an unearthly creature, portentous as the old man in Chaucer's Pardoners' Tale. Malory does not let his hero indulge in a self-conscious soliloquy at the moment the very sound of doom is in

the air. The smiling question of the chevalier about the horn-blowing is changed by Malory, not because, as Dr. Vettermann (p. 73) suggests, he failed to understand the pun in the French words, but because to an English ear, punning is hardly suited to the moment of tragic climax. The whole irony of the fateful situation is apprehended in Balin's brief but bitter speech: "I am the prise and yet am I not dead."

The next episode of the story tells of the evil custom of the castle. The French text makes the scene as cheerful as it is typical, and wholly untouched by awe or pathos. More than a hundred dancing and singing maidens welcome the hero warmly; "il est si esbahis de la joie que elles li font qu'il ne set qu'il doie dire" (II, 45). After the maidens come chevaliers richly dressed and a seneschal, from whom the hero asks why the maidens are so happy. The seneschal explains that it is because they will see him joust, for it is the custom to make each stranger knight do this. The hero condemns the custom as "mauvaise et vilainne"; "car quant uns chevaliers errans vient de lointainnes terres lassés et travilliés de grans jornees, quidiés vous qu'il soit si aaisiés de combatre maintenant com sera li chevaliers de la tour qui ne fera fors que reposer? Iceste chose ne di je mie, che sachiés vous, por moi; car je ne sui ne si lassés ne si travilliés, ains me plaist bien autant li combatres comme feroit li repositers; mais je le di pour la coustume" (II, 46).

In contrast to all this Malory merely mentions the "glad semblance" made by the knights and maidens for Balin; he omits the polite but unnecessary seneschal, and makes the lady of the castle herself briefly explain its strange custom. Balin's answer is characteristic. He does not, like the dapper French knight, discuss it as a point of chivalric courtesy, but he speaks in words that make him known to us as a brave but worn and weary man. There is a mournful cadence in his speech as appealing as anything in the whole of the *Morte Darthur*. "Well," said Balin, "sine I shall thereto I am ready, but travelling men are oft weary and their horses too; but though my horse be weary my heart is not weary, I would be fain there my death should be" (Ch. 17).

As the hero goes to the joust, he exchanges his shield, by which his brother, who is the defender of the castle, might have recognized him, for another one. In the French text it is the ubiquitous seneschal who remarks: "Sire, vostre ecus ne me samble mie moult boins" (II, 46); in Malory a blunt knight says:

“methinketh your shield is not good, I will lend you a bigger.” In both versions when the hero has reached the island where the fight is to take place, a maiden gives him his second warning. “Sire chevaliers,” she says in the *Merlin* (II, 47), “chou est tout de la mesqueance que vos avés vostre escu cangié: se vous l’eussies a vostre col, vous n’i morussies hui, ains vous reconneust vostre amis et vous lui. Mais ceste mesqueance vous envoie Dieus pour le fait que vous fesistes chiés le roi Pellehan en lieu de venganche, si n’est mie la venganche si grans comme li fais le requesist. Che vous mande Merlins par moi.”

Dr. Vettermann (p. 76) cites this passage as an instance of the better motivation and sequence of the French text because it definitely connects this episode with Merlin’s prophecies of the doom that would follow Balin. She condemns Malory’s version because he represents the maiden as addressing Balin by his own name, which she could not have known, and because no reference is made to the Dolorous Stroke, nor to the maiden as Merlin’s messenger. The cold lucidity of the maiden’s speech in the *Merlin* may be more satisfying to some, but it is at least fair to observe that it completely destroys all suspense in the situation, and implies a decided mental denseness on the part of the hero who, after such a warning, proceeded to fight unquestioningly with his unknown “amis.” With more sense of sustaining both the mystery and the suspense, Malory makes the maiden give her warning in words that only add to Balin’s sad bewilderment. “O knight Balin,” she cries, “why have ye left your own shield? alas ye have put yourself in great danger.” She herself as a character needs no more explanation than does the old hoar man. Both, for Malory, are simply the palpable voices of destiny. It is difficult not to suspect that, in their naming of Balin, Malory is deliberately suggesting the old superstition of the fatality of the “death naming.”⁵

It is characteristic that the French writer should set forth at length the various emotions of the hero (II, 47) as he prepares himself for the battle, and should devote three pages (printed text, II, 49-52) to the battle itself. Malory uses a more reticent method, but it is significant that he adds at least one most important detail. Though the French text consistently refers to the hero as “li chevaliers as deus espees,” and several times makes definite reference to the fatal sword which the knight had taken

⁵ Cf. Child, *English and Scottish Ballads*, I, 95.

from the sword maiden, and henceforth carried in addition to his own; though it even states (I, 253), in an earlier passage, that it was with this sword that he was to kill his brother, in this last supreme scene, nothing is said of its use. Dr. Vettermann (p. 65) admits that Malory evidently noted this serious omission, and bettered the text by saying that Balin, hard pressed, at last "smote him again with that unhappy sword." The addition proves not only Malory's perception of the fundamental unity of the story, for in achieving the sword, Balin incurred his doom, but also something of his instinct for what E. K. Chambers, in his essay on Malory (Oxford, 1922) calls the "vivid word." The word "unhappy" in the Book of Balin, as in the sorrowful lament of Lancelot (XXI, 8), is like a knell, solemn and recurrent. Balin, himself, is beyond all others a knight unhappy.

When the brothers have wounded each other to the death, they begin to talk. In the French text the speeches are as discursive as they are complimentary. The writer tells us of the brothers laments, of their piety, their insistence on a common burial in the place where they had fallen, their farewell to the lady of the castle. Malory keeps the sense of all of this, but with a more dramatic sense of the swift passing moments. His brothers act and speak as mortally wounded men might do, briefly, poignantly. Dr. Vettermann (p. 77) condemns him for omitting the rather long story which the French author gives at this point in order to explain the custom of the castle. The account of the jealous knight who took his lady there for safe keeping and of their little retinue (*Merlin*, II, 54), and of how, in order to keep himself in practice, the knight established the custom, and how it was kept up by his conqueror until at last it was the turn of Balaans to serve as the Knight of the Castle, is a rather puerile little story in itself. Coming as it does in the very middle of the scene of the brothers' death, it breaks and dissipates the tragic effect. We need no explanation of the custom which is of interest only as Fate's last cruel trick against the brothers. Balan's woeful words in Malory give all that is essential. "Here it happed me to slay a knight that kept this island, and syne might I never depart and no more should ye, brother, an ye might have slain me as ye have, and escaped yourself with the life." There is in this last scene in the English version unbroken dignity and pathos.

The foregoing comparison of the same climactic scene in the two versions makes plain the essential differences between them.

Whatever one may feel about the fluent ease of the French writer, it must be admitted that in his hands the episode lacks the pathos and the mystery which it has in Malory's. *A priori* it might well be expected that a man of the same race as the author of *Beowulf* would deal with *Wyrð*⁶ in a manner more suited to the concept than could one not born to the inheritance of "Teutonic melancholy." In its entirety Malory's Book of Balin might well serve as an illustration of the ancient saying; "Gaeth á wyrð swá hío scel." Balin is not an "unfaege eorl," though his courage endures; he is fated to fall. The book is too mediaeval, too Catholic, to voice any articulate protest against "gods careless of our doom," but it is heavy with the sense of the doom of death and of human helplessness. The brothers at the end make plaintive moan to each other: "We came both out of one tomb,—and so shall we lie both in one pit."⁷

In addition to her belief that Malory misses or minimizes the true purport of his story, Dr. Vettermann argues that his characterization is weaker and his style poorer than that of the French author. So far as the last point is concerned, the best answer lies in the passages already quoted. Even Dr. Vettermann admits (p. 83) that Malory has spared us "dadurch manche Weit-schweifigkeit seines ungemein ausführlichen Vorgängers," but she nevertheless maintains that his text suffers from the omission of such "Wortspielen," comparisons, and rhetorical questions as occur in his original. This must remain a matter of taste. If one prefers a pun to the tragic pathos of Balin's speech when he hears the horn blowing, there is no more to say. But one wonders what "Pathos" means when one reads the critic's comment (p. 83); "Für das Pathos seines Vorgängers zeigt er wenig Verständnis." The charge rests altogether on Malory's omission of the hero's pessimistic complaints against fortune, and of Lot's description of the baby Modred. Similarly one wonders that the conventional prettiness of the French writer's more lyric passages about the rising of the moon or the singing of the birds,⁸ should be preferred to the stark simplicity of Malory's version.

⁶ Cf. Klaeber, *Anglia*, XXXVI, 171; also *Archiv*, CXV, 179.

⁷ Malory's single sentence gives illustration of his free and deliberate methods in translation. It is twice used in the French text. "Car tout aussi comme nos cors issirent d'un vaissiel, aussi reseront il en un vaissiel mis" (p. 53), and again, (p. 55) "Et savés vous, dame, pour coi je le vous requier que nous soions en un vaissiel mis? Pour chou que nous issimes d'un vaissiel, che fu dou ventre nostre mere."

⁸ Cf. Vettermann, p. 83: *Merl.*, I, 236 "Quant la lune fu levee biele et clere,"

As regards characterization in the two versions, Dr. Vettermann thinks that Malory's omission of certain small human weaknesses lessens the reality of his characters.⁹ In the case of the hero, she notes (p. 79) that the Huth *Merlin* represents Balain as suffering at court first from offended pride (*Merl.*, I, 217), and then from his fear of having too much offended the king (I, 221), and later from his fear of what will happen to him on the island (II, 47). It is open to doubt whether anyone save a critic with a thesis would find in these abbreviated suggestions of small emotions anything suggestive of actual realism, or appropriate to the large and simple concept of essentially epic character. The hero in the Huth *Merlin*, of whom so much is said, remains after all an entirely conventional figure; Malory alone makes him known to us by his own words as a blunt and obstinate, but heroic and unfortunate man. A striking instance of the difference in portraiture comes at the very beginning. In the Huth *Merlin* (I, 216), the chevalier, annoyed because the sword-girt maiden hesitates to allow him to make trial of the sword, retorts: "Damoisieles, ne m'aiiés en despit pour ma povreté: je fui ja plus riches." For this bit of vainglory Malory substitutes a speech that is not only a notable amplification of his original, but one of which the spirit is noble, and English to the core; "Ah! fair Damosel, said Balin, worthiness and good tatches and good deeds are not only in arrayment, but manhood and worship is hid within a man's person, and many a worshipful knight is not known unto all people, and therefore worship and hardiness is not in arrayment" (II, c. 2).

Throughout the book, Malory's Balin is possessed of dramatic and forceful personality. His speeches are varied in key. Balin is fierce sometimes, "boistous," in truth, as Merlin says. "By the faith of my body," he bursts out angrily when rebuked by Merlin, "I might not save her, for she slew herself suddenly" (II,

or II, 38, "la lune luisoit biele et clere," or the description of the birds singing, *Merl.*, II, 93.

⁹ She argues (p. 80-82) that Malory idealizes both Arthur and Merlin. She admits that Malory keeps all that is said of Merlin as prophet and wizard, the only roles suitable for him to play in this story of strange customs and enchantments, but grudges his omission of Merlin's "kleinen menschlichen Schwachen" (p. 82), these apparently being represented by Merlin's evil liaison with Morgain. In the same breath, and without noting the incongruity in the Huth MS. which her own words make more apparent, she regrets (p. 82) that Malory did not emphasize, as did his source, the priestly character of Merlin, and his numerous moral admonitions to the king.

8). The imprecation alone changes the tone of this from the polite utterance of the French chevalier: "Je ne me poc si haster que ele ne se fust ochise." (*Merl.*, I, 231). When Merlin utters his mournful prophecy that Balin shall kill his friend, Malory's Balin speaks with abrupt, harsh vigor: "If I wist it were sooth that ye say, . . . I would slay myself to make thee a liar" (II, 8).¹⁰ In the strange episode of the capture of the maiden by those who desire a dishful of her blood, her protector Balin speaks with sharp courage and sense: "She shall bleed as much as she may bleed, but I will not lose the life of her whiles my life lasteth" (Ch. 13). Later, though the castle of King Pellam lies in ruins, and Merlin has but just rescued him, Balin stands firm: "I would have my damosel," said Balin (Ch. 16), nor would he depart till he saw her lying dead. In the French text the hero simply inquired in characterless fashion: "Et de la damoisiele qui avoec moi vint chaiens, savés vous nulle nouveiele?" (II, 28). In the moving incident of the betrayed lover whom Balin tried to help, there is a striking enhancement in Malory's version of the tragic pathos of the situation. In the French text, the lover, having killed his false lady and her paramour, bursts into mournful outcries: "Ha! las, que ai jou fait?" (II, 41). His grief brings him at last to some reproach of Balaain: "Sire, or poés veoir que vous avés gaaigniet en moustrer moi mon grant duel." Nowhere in the French version is there anything to suggest the confession of despairing weakness that there is in Malory. "O Balin," cries the lover, "much sorrow hast thou brought unto me, for hadst thou not shewed me that sight, I should have passed my sorrow." Likewise there is nothing in the French to match even remotely with the heartsick answer of the wretched Balin: "Forsooth, I did it to this intent that it should better thy courage,—and to cause you to leave love of such a lady; God knoweth I did none other but as I would ye did to me" (Ch. 17).

To deny the power of forceful dramatic characterization to speeches such as these, to fail to observe Malory's habitual turning of commentary into dramatic speech¹¹ and action, is uncritical prejudice. With the minimum of indirect statement, Malory

¹⁰ Again this is an example of close translation on Malory's part, yet with a characteristic change of cadence. The French text reads (I, 232): "Et se je cuidoie que si dolereuse chose avenist par moi comme tu devises, je m'ochiroie anchois que ne t'en fessisse menteour, et j'aroie droit de che faire; car mieus vaurroit ma mors que ma vie.

¹¹ Cf. Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 7, on Malory's use of dialogue; also Scudder, p. 390 ff.

makes his Balin a distinctive personality, one that breaks up and completely overshadows the conventional pattern type found in his source. Professor Scudder's estimate of Malory's power in this direction is more than justified. Tested by its great scenes, by individual speeches, and by cumulative effect, Malory's version can be shown, in comparison with its source, to possess superior power, purpose, and artistry.

The minor charges that Malory's version is occasionally inconsistent, or obscure, or mistaken in translation, must be dealt with briefly. To say that Malory misunderstood his original in the three instances cited by Sommer (III, 79, 96) and Dr. Vettermann (p. 30, 71) is to underrate both his intelligence and his free methods of work. No one, for instance, who knew any French at all could mistranslate "la dame de l'isle d'Avalon." (*Merl.*, I, 213, 223). Malory's equivalent, Lady Lyle of Avelion (Ch. 5), bears witness to a deliberate change on his part. When his French text failed to give a proper name, for the use of which he had a peculiar predilection,¹² he invented one. Thus in the story of Balin, the French "duc de Harniel" (*Merl.*, II, 35) became in Malory's version Duke Hermel (ch. 16); the "chevaliers mesconneus" (*Merl.*, I, 279) became Herlews de Berbeus (ch. 12); another unnamed chevalier (*Merl.*, II, 2-12) Malory christened Peryn de Mountbeliard¹³ (ch. 13); the unnamed, betrayed lover (*Merl.*, II, 32) he called Garnysshe of the Mount (ch. 16), and for the unnamed lover of Morgain le Fay (*Merl.*, I, 267) Malory (ch. 11) borrowed from another and later lover, the name Accolon (*Merl.*, II, 174). Dr. Vettermann (p. 71 ff.) cites some of these names as examples of Malory's "Ergänzungen" without perceiving that they establish here as elsewhere evidence of a distinctive habit on Malory's part, and that Lady Lyle in no way "beruht auf einem Versehen, bezw. einer Verlesung Malorys" (p. 71).

The inconsistencies cited by the critics are in part justifiable, in part not. To the present writer, Malory's forgetfulness in

¹² This is best witnessed by his numerous "roll calls" of knights. Cf. Bk. VII. ch. 26; XIX, 11; XX, 5, 18. In Book V, where the evidence is plain that Malory made use of the alliterative *Morte Arthur* (Thornton MS.), a poem in which the author's fondness for proper names seems even to have surpassed Malory's, it is interesting to find that Malory not only occasionally added a name, but freely changed those which he found. Cf. Sommer, III, 148-175. Again the critic, because of these names, is forced to conjecture (p. 156) another lost version, but the supposition is as pointless as in the Book of Balin.

¹³ The name of Gautier de Montbeliard (d. 1212), a patron of Robert de Borron's is mentioned in Robert's *Merlin*. Cf. Huth *Merlin*, p. ix; Sommer, III, 91.

stating that the sword-girt maiden returned to court after she had departed (ch. 2) and so was present to hear Merlin's reproaches (ch. 4), seems a less serious matter than the forgetfulness of the French author in mentioning the fatal sword by which Balin achieves his doom and kills his brother. Neither writer remembers to fulfill the prophecy that the hero should kill with this sword the brother of the maid who wore it (*Merl.*, I, 224; Malory, ch. 5), and neither writer explains why the hero, who after his encounter with the sword maiden seems always to have carried two swords, is represented as weaponless when his own sword breaks in King Pellam's castle.¹⁴ Impeccable accuracy of detail is not a virtue of mediaeval romancers and in these matters Malory is neither better nor worse than his source.¹⁵ In others, however, which have likewise been cited to his disparagement, he has been palpably misjudged.

Among the "Abänderungen" made by Malory, and considered unfortunate by Dr. Vettermann (p. 72), are his treatment of the hero's name, and his explanation for Balin's poor estate at Arthur's court. The French author throughout his story makes a mystery of the hero's name. Balaain is introduced as a poor knight of Northumberland whose name is not known to Arthur until Merlin reveals it (*Merl.*, I, 233); his brother Balaans conceals it from Mark (*Merl.*, I, 233), and the author is careful to let no one of the characters except Merlin (*Merl.*, II, 27) address the hero by his name. He is known simply by his cognomen "li chevaliers a deus espees," a clear borrowing from older French romance. At best this is an artificial sort of secrecy which serves no plain purpose. Malory omitted it, but, as has been already intimated, the omission did not involve him in the contradiction

¹⁴ For some inscrutable reason Dr. Vettermann (p. 65) thinks the Huth text "klarer als Malory," because it twice refers to the fact that Balin used his own, and not the enchanted sword in moments of danger. (*Merl.*, I, 253): II, 27). Dr. Vettermann is right, however, in pointing out that in Malory's version, Balin is represented as still possessed of two swords (Ch. 17, 18), though his own had been broken in the Grail castle.

¹⁵ In the matter of Excalibur, it may also be granted that Malory is more careless than his source. In Book I, ch. 6, 9, he had thus named the sword which Arthur "had by miracle" of the stone, and therefore the name should not have been given to the sword which Arthur received from the Lady of the Lake, (I, 25), and for which in Book II she claims the gift of Balin's head. Cf. Sommer, III, 79; Vettermann, p. 74. But the variety and bulk of the sources used by Malory in his first two books might well excuse some carelessness on his part in matters of detail, particularly in view of his neat dovetailing of these varied texts together, and of the power shown in his revision of the whole story of Balin.

supposed by Dr. Vettermann (p. 11, 64). The old man and the maiden who at the end call Balin by name have a supernatural purpose; indeed both may be considered, as the old man is plainly shown to be, supernatural personages possessed of unearthly knowledge. Their naming of Balin is an effective dramatic touch which adds to, rather than lessens the sense of ill-boding mystery.

As to Malory's changes in regard to the antecedent story of his hero, they are in the interests of simplicity and realism. The *Huth Merlin* (I, 215) sets forth that Balain had slain a "parent" of the king of Northumberland, that he had been imprisoned for more than half a year, and would have stayed there till he died had not the king's own daughter released him (*Merl.*, I, 228). Malory says bluntly that Balin, a poor Northumberland knight, had slain a cousin of Arthur, had been imprisoned for it, and then "by the good means of the barons he was delivered out of prison." Here as elsewhere Malory lessens the number of characters and omits the irrelevant romantic event. The king's daughter goes into the limbo of unnecessary people together with Gifflet, a youth to whom Arthur speaks (*Merl.*, II, 254) and two squires and a hermit who appear in later episodes in the *Huth Merlin* (I, 250; II, 12; II, 43), and are likewise omitted by Malory.

A study of Malory's narrative omissions in comparison with the *Huth Merlin* goes far to confirm the sense of his power and conscious art. He omits the account of the exhausted knight who brings tidings to Arthur of King Rions' invasion (I, 212), and begins with the episode of the sword maiden which is directly connected with Balin. He condenses the elaborated account of Arthur's anger against the hero when the latter has killed the Lady of the Lake, and of the hero's abject humiliation (I, 220-221), this, it would seem, for the sake of heroic character. He omits the entirely purposeless episode of Merlin's meeting with Blaise (*Merl.*, I, 232), and, despite his own liking for battle scenes, reduces the manifold details of the fight of the two brothers against Rions (*Merl.*, I, 233-240) to vigorous but briefest statement. "Anon Balin and his brother met with the king, and smote him down, and wounded him fiercely, and laid him to the ground; and there they slew on the right hand and on the left hand, and slew more than forty of his men, and the remnant fled." The battle scenes in the French text are extremely well told, but they are entirely too long, too over-emphasized, for the

story to which they belong. Malory omits Merlin's masterful counsel to Arthur to appease King Lot, and the description of Lot's anger with Arthur for the supposed death of his infant son Modred (*Merl.*, I, 244-48); also the details of Merlin's talk with Lot (*Merl.*, I, 254-256). Throughout the French text, Arthur and his court play almost as important a part as Balaain and his brother; in Malory's version the effort is plainly made to eliminate or else subordinate all material that does not directly deal with the brothers. To this end he omits entirely from his book the account of the young Gawain's oath of vengeance for the death of his father, Loth (*Merl.*, I, 262-263); also the story of Morgain's love for Merlin, the birth of her child Yvain (*Merl.*, I, 266); of her second *amour* with an unnamed chevalier to whom she gave the sheath of Arthur's sword, and of Arthur's vengeance (*Merl.*, I, 267-272)—material of which Malory made much more fitting use in the purely romantic episodes of his fourth book. Malory likewise omitted from the story of Balin the account of the young Baudemagus (*Merl.*, I, 273), of his friendship with Gavain and Gahariet, and of Merlin's prophecy concerning his fate (273-275).

The material thus discarded by Malory is all of essentially the same kind; it is purely romantic and it concerns the familiar personages of Arthur's court. It is not without interest or popular appeal. That it was so ruthlessly and completely sacrificed is proof apparent of a controlling purpose, of a conscious realization that whatever its charm elsewhere, it did not belong to the tragic and fatalistic story of the two brothers. The result of its exclusion is that in Malory's version there is no single scene or chapter in which one or the other of the brothers is not present, or is not directly named. With absolute unity of effect, with a terseness of style that yet keeps cadences of haunting beauty, Malory achieves in the Book of Balin a version that no one has ever bettered. The comparison of it with its source gives us the most accurate measure we possess of his own independent power, of the genius with which he could transform an "olde book." Sad as the story is, there is in it a kind of nobleness that, like Balin's first adventure, "doth raise the heart." It is Malory's Book of Courage. "Dread you not," said Balin, "we will do what we may."

OBSERVATIONS ON THE *PELERINAGE CHARLEMAGNE**

RIBALDRY and piety, heroism and farce, realism and fantasy, make up the extraordinary *mélange* we know as the *Pèlerinage Charlemagne*. In 1907 when Coulet's impressive study appeared, French and German scholars were still at odds as to what to call the poem—an epic and therefore noble?¹ a *fabliau*, parody, *conte à rire*, and therefore not noble at all? For some seven hundred years this boastful, rollicking figure among the stately dignitaries of the old *chansons de geste* has escaped, and in all probability will continue to escape, exact classification.

But that is not to say that the poem is in itself mysterious. More than twenty years ago much was known about its antecedents in legend and tale, and about its connection with certain holy relics and with the great fair held at St. Denis, near Paris. The attempts, however, to elucidate it as purely an expression of *l'esprit gaulois* have always left something unexplained. No scholar's skill could ever make it quite credible that the revered and mighty Charlemagne of the Jerusalem episode was identical with the almost comic Charlemagne of Constantinople. Coulet argued (pp. 323-27) very plausibly for the unity of the two stories in the tradition used by our poet, but no skill could suffice ultimately to hide the fact that this unity was made up of utterly diverse elements. It was made by one who took now from fact, now from fiction. The poet's debt to fact, to things he at least believed were real, things in Paris, in St. Denis, in Jerusalem, was long since made clear by Gaston Paris² and other scholars.

* From *Modern Philology*, XXV (1928), 331-49.

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¹ J. Coulet, *Études sur l'ancien poème français du Voyage de Charlemagne en Orient* (Montpellier, 1907). Previous interpretations of the poem are here reviewed (pp. 327-68); on pp. 368-82 M. Coulet gives his own theory.

² *Romania*, IX (1880), 1-50; Coulet, pp. 72-236.

The poet's debt to secular fiction, and particularly to Celtic fiction, was first proposed in a brief but illuminating article by Kenneth Webster.³ It is the purpose of this paper to follow up some of the clues proposed by him and especially to develop the idea on which he touched only tentatively, namely, that even the *douze pairs* of this episode might be primitive in origin. The first essential is to investigate the sources of the background, the whole setting provided for the peers in the Constantinople episode.

THE LOCALIZATION

The story tells us that Charlemagne, spurred by his wife's boast of the superior splendor of Hugo le Fort, emperor of Constantinople, sets out to find him. Charlemagne's journey to Jerusalem is described with topographical correctness; Jerusalem itself with approximate realism. When, however, Charlemagne decides to return to France by way of Constantinople, the description that follows is of quite a different character. A singularly brief itinerary gets him from Jerusalem to Jericho, over the hills of Abilant, past the Rock of Guitume, whatever that may be, and so into sight of the magnificent city.

Virent Constantinoble, une citet vaillant,
Les clochiers et les egles et les pons reluisanz.
Destre part la citet demie liue grant
Troevent vergiers plantez de pins et loriers blans;
La rose i est florie, li alborz et l'aiglenz.
Vint milie chevaliers i troverent seanz,—
Et sont vestut de palies et d'ermines toz blans
Et de granz pels de martre josqu'as piez traïnanz.
As eschies et as tables se vont esbaneiant,
Et portent lor falcons et lor ostors alquant—
Et treis milie pulceles a orfreis reluisanz.
Vestuës sont de palies, s'ont les cors avenanz,
Et tienent lor amis, si se vont deportant.⁴

Charlemagne now asks where is the king of this land and is told by one of the strange knights to ride until he sees the

³ "Notes on the Ballad of King Arthur and King Cornwall and on the Pilgrimage of Charlemagne," *Englische Studien*, XXXVI (1906), 337-69.

⁴ Vss. 262-74, from the reconstructed text of Koschwitz' edition, *Karls des grossen Reise nach Jerusalem und Constantinopel* (Leipzig, 1901); 5th ed.; a sixth edition appeared in 1913. An edition by A. J. Cooper (Paris, 1925) has an English glossary.

king sitting under a silken canopy. Charlemagne finds Hugo plowing; the yokes are of shining gold, likewise the axles, the wheels, and the plowshare. Hugo does not go on foot but is drawn in a seat of gold swung between two strong mules. He sits on a cushion of Persian silk with a silver footstool for his feet. Four golden columns support a silken canopy above him. He carries a scepter of red gold. The two kings exchange friendly greetings, and Hugo offers Charlemagne a year's hospitality. When Hugo descends, Charlemagne protests that the golden plow should not be left without guard; Hugo assures him there are no thieves in his realm; the plow could stay safely in the field for seven years. They start together for the palace.

From Gaston Paris to Coulet writers on the *Pèlerinage* except Webster have been content to believe that all this was inspired chiefly by travelers' tales of the marvelous but still actual riches of the imperial city. Both Paris and Coulet⁵ were persuaded that the descriptions of the two cities, Jerusalem and Constantinople, are fundamentally realistic. Coulet wrote (p. 283):

A l'exception de quelques détails, comme le fauteuil d'or et la charrue d'or du roi Hugon, qui sont de l'invention de l'auteur, tous les traits, dont il peint le palais de Byzance, sont empruntés à la réalité. Ils ne sont que cette réalité à peine transformée . . . par l'imagination naïve de ceux qui en avaient contemplé les merveilles.

He is surprised that the poet did not give more details.

Il n'en a retenu que ce qui concernait le seul palais de Constantinople. Au lieu qu'il donnera sur la topographie de Jérusalem des indications relativement nombreuses et précises, il nous présente de la capitale grecque, comme une vue d'ensemble. . . . C'est une ville d'Orient, c'est la capitale, où se trouve le palais des empereurs grecs, ces deux traits suffisent au tableau qu'il veut présenter à son public (p. 284).

It is evident that Coulet's view is open to question. Within short compass the poet has given us not few but many specific details. That they do not accord with historic fact, as Webster perceived, does not lessen their pertinence. It is no general view but a brilliant, comparatively detailed picture that is offered of

⁵ Paris, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-29; Coulet, pp. 280-83.

this Constantinople behind its shining bridges, with its gardens of enchantment, its hosts of richly clad youths and maidens. It is a land of youth, a land of summer, though these descriptive phrases are not specifically used; it is a land of impossible wealth and of no theft, a land ruled by a king whom surely no traveler ever saw. Coulet should not have argued that the poet was controlled by tradition in making Charlemagne go to a real Constantinople, that this episode was central and necessary to his whole story, and then maintained that Hugo the Marvelous was purely an invention of the poet. The king was neither more nor less "invented" than was his realm.⁶

Had not some of the descriptive details corresponded to possible facts, had not the name Constantinople been given to this city, it is doubtful if its true nature would so long have remained unrecognized. Yet it has long been known that Constantinople, Byzantium, Greece, are names that serve, notably in Celticized story, for the Otherworld. Webster (p. 356) has well remarked that the undisguised fairy heroine of *Partonopeus de Blois* lives in Besance, and that medieval Irish stories frequently place the Otherworld in Greece. We remember that in the *Mabinogion* Peredur's fairy love is an empress of Cristinobyl the Great.⁷ In various Welsh triads Constantinople is called Gwlad yr Haf,⁸ the 'Summer Country,' a characteristic name for the Celtic Otherworld. Finally, we may note the frankly fabulous description of the city's king. His golden plow, his incredible magnificence, place him certainly with those gods and culture

⁶ See especially A. H. Krappe, "The Ploughman King," *Revue hispanique*, XLVI, 516-46.

⁷ *Mabinogion*, trans. C. Guest, Everyman's Lib., p. 207; trans. J. Loth (1913), II, 100. See also *White Book Mabinogion* (ed. Evans), col. 162, l. 12. A fanciful explanation of the name Constantinople is given in the thirteenth-century story, *Li Contes dou Roi Coustant l'Empereur*: "Et si fu puis la cites apielee Coustantinoble, pour son pere Coustant, ki devant avoit apielee Bisanche."

⁸ Quoted from the *Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales* (1801) by Loth, *Mabinogion*, II, 313-14. Though these triads are open to question as in part the possible fabrication of Iolo Morganwg, it is still significant that the term is used in association with Hu Gadarn, for though this legendary plowing-hero of the Cymry may have been translated, as his name certainly was, straight out of the *Pèlerinage* by both Iolo Morganwg and his predecessors, still they could not have taken this special phrase from the same source since the French text offers no suggestion for it. In other words, "Summer Land, the place where Constantinople is now," seems to offer a genuine bit of Welsh tradition. Prof. G. J. Williams of the University College of South Wales, hopes shortly to publish an article on Hu Gadarn in the *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*. Cross notes that the Triads also identify Gwlad yr Haf with Taprobane (*Deffrobani*). Cf. Loth, op. cit., II, 313.

heroes whose legends explain the introduction of agriculture rather than with authentic Greek emperors of history.

The recognition that king, city, and land are equally unreal justifies the expectation that Hugo's palace is of the same nature. Fortunately the details given by the poet are so numerous and precise that they can leave no doubt as to the essentially Other-world character of this remarkable conception.

THE REVOLVING PALACE

L'emperere descent defors le . . . marbre blanc.
Cez degrez de la sale vint al palais errant,
Set milie chevaliers i troverent seanz,
A peliçons ermines, bialz escharimanz;
As eschies et as tables se vont esbaneiant. . . .
Charles vit le palais et la richece grant;
A or fin sont les tables, les chaieres, li banc.
Li palais fut d'azur listez et avenanz
Par molt chieres peintures a bestes et serpenz,
A totes creatures et a oisels volanz.
Li palais fut voltiz et desore cloanz,
Et fut faiz par compas et serez noblement;
L'estache del miliu neielee d'argent.
Cent colombes i at tot de marbre en estant;
Chascune est a fin or neielee devant . . .
De cuivre et de metal tresjetet dous enfanz.
Chascuns tient en sa boche un corn d'ivoire blanc.
Se galerne ist de mer, bise ne altre venez
Qui fierent al palais dedevers occident,
Il le font torneier et menuet et sovent
Come roe de char qui a terre descent.
Cil corn sonent et boglent et tonent ensemment
Com tabors o toneires o grant cloche qui pent;
Li uns esguardet l'autre ensemment en riant
Que ço vos fust viaire que tuit fussent vivant [vss. 334 ff.].

Charles expresses amazement at this palace, which surpasses those of Alexander, Constantine, or Crescentius. A wind rises.

Bruiant vint al palais, d'une part l'acoillit,
Si l'at fait esmoveir et soëf et serit;
Altresil fait torner com arbre de molin [vss. 370 ff.].

The images make music;

Ço'st avis, qui l'escoltet, qu'il seit en paraïs,
La ou li angele chantent et soëf et serit.
Molt fut granz li orages, la neis et li gresilz,
Et li venz durs et forz, qui tant bruit et fremist.
Mais les fenestres sont a cristal molt gentil,
Tailliees et confites a brasme oltremarin.
Laenz fait tant requeit et soëf et serit
Come en mai en estet quant solelz esclarcist.
Molt fut gries li orages et hisdos et costis.
Charles vit le palais torneier et fremir [vss. 376 ff.];

Charles and the peers, unable to keep their feet, lie on the floor lamenting. At vesper time the storm ceases, the Frenchmen are escorted to a magnificent banquet at which they feast overmuch. When it is time to rest,

Li reis Hugue li Forz Charlemaigne apelat
Lui et les doze pers, sis trait a une part;
Le rei tint par la main, en sa chambrel menat,
Voltice, peinte a flors, a pieres de cristal.
Une escarboncle i luist et cler refflambeiat,
Confite en une estache del tens rei Golias.
Doze liz i at bons de cuivre et de metal,
Oreilliers de velos et linçoels de cendal;
Al menor ont a traire vint boef et quatre char.
Li trezimes en mi est tailliez a compas
Li pecol sont d'argent et l'esponde d'esmail.
Li covertors fut bons, que Maseüz ovrat,
Une fee molt gente qui le rei le dunat [vss. 418 ff.];

Before discussing this picturesque passage it is well to quote also certain additional details, especially with regard to the palace, which are found in the Welsh version of the *Pèlerinage* in the Red Book of Hergest⁹ and which illustrate admirably certain concepts of the Celtic translator.

Sculptured in the floor appeared the likeness of all the animals, both wild and tame. In the entrance at its lower end, that is below the entrance, there was sculptured the likeness of the sea and every

⁹ *Ystoria Charles*, from the Red Book of Hergest (trans. by Rhys), pp. 26-27, in *Sechs Bearbeitungen des altfrz. Gedichts von Karls des Grossen Reise* (ed. Koschwitz; Heilbronn, 1879).

kind of piscine creature bred in the sea. In the sides of the hall was the likeness of the sky and every bird that flew in it just as though it were the air. The top of the hall had the form and aspect of the firmament with the sun, the moon, the stars and the constellations arranged in the firmament so that they shone in the top of the hall, according to various seasons. There was a circle in the hall with a column of huge size fashioned like a pillar in the centre, with a profuse and strong covering of gold about it which was adorned with sculpturing of exceeding great ingenuity. Around it there were a hundred pillars of becoming and fair marble, as far in measurement from the central pillar as the large circle of the sides bore from the circle of the hundred pillars.—Whilst Charlemagne and his host were admiring the workmanship of the hall, behold there came from the sea sculptured at the lower end of the hall a sudden wind on the shaft of a millwheel, which turned swiftly in the hall on the one pillar as the mill turned on the pivot. Then the images began to blow their horns.

In connection with this description we should here recall Professor Howard Patch's study of "Mediaeval Descriptions of the Otherworld" (*PMLA*, XXXIII [1918]). "The Otherworld realm," he observes, "is usually quite easy to identify. Its situation is various; on a mountain, perhaps, or on an island. There is a splendid castle usually guarded by armed figures; and a garden, with a beautiful fountain or fair running streams, and trees and remarkable birds. The land is hard to enter, and sometimes difficult to leave." Of special interest in the present case are his references, too numerous, with few exceptions, to call for further illustration, on such details as these: the height (pp. 606 ff.) on which the Otherworld abode is situated; the brilliant walls of gold, crystal (p. 610); the enchanting garden (pp. 619 ff.), the Otherworld river and bridge (pp. 627, 635); the central column or pillar (p. 626) which appears in several Otherworld descriptions; the revolving castle itself (p. 616, n. 54). The garden, the river, the bridge, are so slightly mentioned in the *Pèlerinage* that they afford no real evidence; it is the round whirling castle with its incredible magnificence that must be recognized not only as an Otherworld but as a Celtic Otherworld abode, if the clues already noted are to be confirmed.

Though the idea of a whirling round house is by no means exclusively Celtic,¹⁰ it is important to note that round houses were

¹⁰ H. O. Sypherd, *Studies in Chaucer's "Hous of Fame,"* Chaucer Soc. (1907), pp. 144-50, notes the whirling round palace of Prester John, and the revolving

a fact in primitive Celtic architecture¹¹ and that revolving houses appear frequently even in modern Celtic folklore.¹² Whatever be the origin of the idea of the whirling house, it is certain that Hugo's palace, revolving till vesper time and turning like a mill-wheel, is extraordinarily like the circular fort over which every night, according to the *Fled Bricrend*,¹³ Curoi chanted a spell so that it (the house) was "as swift as a millstone." This very image recurs in a modern Irish variant of the old Curoi story, where it is said that the castle of the Naked-Hung-up-Man¹⁴ whirls around like a millstone continuously, and no one can enter but himself, for the castle is enchanted. There are also certain Arthurian instances¹⁵ in which the turning castle has something of the vastness and splendor associated with Hugo's palace, but since these details can also be paralleled individually in non-Celtic tradition,¹⁶ it seems best to turn to a romance, late in date but indubitably of the same origin though independent of the *Pèlerinage*, which offers an absolute parallel, not to one or two, but to practically all the peculiar features of Hugo's palace. For this there can be no explanation but that the *Pèlerinage* and the romance in question, *Arthur of Little Britain*,¹⁷ had a common source in some form of Celtic tradition.

houses in Russian folk tales; in these the castles are sometimes said to stand on hen's legs, sometimes on a single column of silver.

¹¹ Nitze, "The Grail Castle," *Studies in Honor of Marshall Elliott*, I, 33; Brown, "Iwain," *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, VIII, 197; and Macalister's article referred to below, n. 24.

¹² Sypherd, *op. cit.*, refers to the following instances: in *Saudan Og and Young Conal* (Curting, *Hero Tales*, pp. 86-87) the revolving castle of the High King of the World is on an island; in *Cold Feet and Queen of Lonesome Island* the Queen's castle is always whirling (*ibid.*, p. 250); in *McCool, Faolan, and the Mountain*, the giant's whirling castle stands on one leg (*ibid.*, p. 507); in *Cuculin* (Curtin, *Myths of Ireland*, p. 322) the Queen of the Wilderness lives in a tower which turns on wheels; in the *Queen of the Speckled Dagger* (Herrig, *Archiv* [1899], pp. 103, 154) an iron tower turns.

¹³ "Irish Texts Soc.," II. 103. Nitze (*loc. cit.*, p. 26 n.) cites as the chief Irish parallel the fiercely revolving rampart in the *Voyage of Maelduin* (Rev. celt., X. 81).

¹⁴ Noted by Sypherd from *Blaiman, Son of Apple* (Curtin, *Hero Tales*, p. 397); R. S. Loomis (*Celtic Myth and Arthurian Romance* [New York, 1927], p. 21) observes that the Naked-Hung-up-Man takes the place of Curoi the enchanter.

¹⁵ Cf. *Perlesvaus*, ed. Potvin, I, 195; *High History* (Everyman ed.), p. 206; *Diu Crône*, vss. 12945-66; *Mule sans Frein*, vss. 440-53; *Wigalois*, vss. 6714 ff.; *Arthur of Little Britain*, as cited below.

¹⁶ For instance, in the imaginary palaces of classical literature (cf. Ovid's account of the Palace of the Sun [*Metamorphoses* ii] some of which are listed by Neilson, *Origins of the Court of Love*, pp. ii, 23, 143, and by Sypherd, pp. 135-36. Of special interest is the round turning palace of Prester John (Sypherd, pp. 144-45).

¹⁷ Translated by Lord Berners from an unpublished French text of the four-

Chapter xliii, pages 135 ff.: Arthur comes to a dreadful river, passes along a path between two mountains, crosses a narrow bridge, and so comes to the Porte Noyre. At the bridge he finds twelve knights on horseback and at the gate twelve more on foot. After a great fight he wins his way into the palace (p. 139).

There he found the moost fayre hous . . . sette all aboute with ymages of fyne golde and the wyndowes were all of fyne ambre. . . . He entred in to a chambre the moste rychest that ever was seen; for syth God first made mankynde, there was no maner of hystorie nor bataile, but in that chambre it was portrayed with golde and asure . . . ; there was portrayed how God dyde create the sonne and the mone, and in the rofe were all the VII planettes wrought with fyne golde and sylver, and all the sytuacyons of the hevens, wherein were pyght many carbuncles and other precyous stones the whiche dyde cast grete clerenes bothe by daye and by nyght. Also there were dyuerse beddes wonderfull ryche, but specyally one, the whiche stode in the myddes of the chambre. . . .

A bed of marvelous richness is here described. "At the head of thys bedde there stode an ymage of golde, and had in hys lyfte hande a bow of yvery, and in hys right hande an arowe of fyne sylver: . . . there were lettres that sayd thus: Whan thys ymage shoteth, than all this palais shall tourne like a whele." Arthur presently sees (p. 140) "in everye corner of the chambre a gret ymage of fyne golde standynge, eche of theym holdynge in theyr handes a great horne of sylver." Three lions and a giant are slain by Arthur as one after the other the images blow their horns. A great storm comes, wind and darkness. As the palace begins to turn, Arthur clutches the central golden image, and is later found on the perilous bed, which he had previously seen pierced by a burning spear, when his friends come to praise him for achieving the great adventure.

Although one is tempted at first reading simply to consider all this a late composite from French romance,¹⁸ the reflection must come sooner or later that only direct imitation of the *Pèlerinage*, or else a common source, could account for the peculiar combination of features in the two romances. Since the narrative

teenth century, and reprinted by Utterson (London, 1814). For some discussion of archaic elements in this romance see R. S. Loomis, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-75.

¹⁸ For examples of the "perilous bed," see Armstrong, *Le Chevalier à l'épée*, pp. 59 ff.

in *Arthur* is so utterly unlike that of the *Pèlerinage*, since nowhere else in *Arthur* does there occur any suggestion of imitation of the *Pèlerinage*, the first possibility is excluded. The second is the only reasonable explanation for the recurrence in the two romances of a description involving a round turning castle beyond a river, a many-windowed, azure-colored hall lighted by one or more carbuncles and painted with sun, moon, and stars;¹⁹ a hall with metal images that blow horns; a hall shaken by a sudden dreadful storm of wind; a hall with one great central pillar and beside it a bed of surpassing magnificence. Chance never brought together such a series of details as these. The only notable descriptive detail that appears in the *Pèlerinage* but is not found in *Arthur of Little Britain* is the circle of twelve beds, and to this we will turn in a moment as the most conclusive piece of evidence for the Celtic origin of this passage. But meanwhile we must admit that the Magic House as described in the *Pèlerinage*, whatever the ultimate origin of the ideas involved, must, before the twelfth century, have become a part of what we can only call Celtic tradition. In the French text, in the amplified Welsh version, the series of details is definite, peculiar, consistent. The same series, recurring in *Arthur of Little Britain*, must derive from the same source.

THE LUMINOUS CARBUNCLE

The wonderful carbuncle which so lighted the bedroom of Charlemagne and his peers that it shone "Cume en mai en estet quant soleil esclarcist" (vs. 443), though it might be dismissed as merely one of those *pierres merveilleuses* (usually carbuncles)²⁰

¹⁹ It is the Welsh version of the *Pèlerinage* which speaks specifically of the sun and moon, etc. In the *Pèlerinage*, not Hugo's palace at Constantinople but the church at Jerusalem is said (vss. 126-27) to be decorated with "les cors de la lune at les festes anvels . . . les bestes par terre et les peissons par mer." This surprising type of decoration for a Christian church can be accounted for, I think, as an anticipatory borrowing from that Otherworld story which the author utilized for the Constantinople episode. Such decoration is a traditional feature in Ovid's Palace of the Sun, and in the Welsh *Ystoria Charles*, in *Arthur of Little Britain*, in *Titirel* (ed. Piper, *Höfisches Epik*, I, 465), and elsewhere.

²⁰ Cf. J. Dickman, *Le Rôle du Surnaturel dans les Chansons de geste* (Paris, 1926), pp. 181-82; Hibbard, *Mediaeval Romance in England* (1924), Index, s. v. "Jewels," "Magic." Of interest are the following observations on the carbuncle from a thirteenth-century prose "Lapidary" (trans. M. Shackford), *Legends and Satires of the Middle Ages* (Boston, 1913), p. 115: "The carbuncle is red . . . it is the lord of stones. By day and by night it illumines all. . . . Saint John did not find the carbuncle among the foundations of the celestial kingdom of Jerusalem,

which appear so frequently in romance, deserves a special word. Belief in the luminosity of the carbuncle may be traced as late as 1568,²¹ and comparisons likening its light to that of the sun are commonplaces of medieval description; the carbuncle among jewels, like gold among metals, was even sometimes ascribed to the sun as the very Jewel of Light.²² But it is surely important to notice that although these ideas occur elsewhere, they are also found continuously in Celtic tradition and the literature influenced by it.²³ In Bricriu's palatial residence King Conchobar's couch, surrounded by those of the twelve heroes of Ulster, "was set with carbuncles (*carrmocail*) and other precious stones which shone . . . making night like unto day."²⁴ Conchobar's couch is also described as surrounded by the twelve chariot-chiefs of Ulster and decorated with carbuncles (*carrmocail*) in one version of the *Tochmarc Emire*.²⁵

for all who desire to behold the carbuncle and the clearness of the true sun must turn to the true light of Jesus Christ."

²¹ F. Kunz (*The Magic of Jewels* [1915], p. 378) notes a story told by Benvenuto Cellini (1568) of a peasant who found a carbuncle glowing among the roots of his vines. On p. 279 Kunz quotes from a ninth-century Arab historian concerning the discovery in the great pyramid of the body of Cheops on whose head was found a carbuncle "the size of an egg, brilliant as the sun."

²² Joan Evans, *Magical Jewels of the Middle Ages* (1922), p. 93. The association of the carbuncle with the sun and of the sun with Christ gives peculiar interest to such passages as that quoted in n. 20 above from the "Lapidary" and as that in the Confession of St. Patrick: "The sun which we see . . . will never reign . . . all who adore it will meet with the punishment of the wicked. We, however, believe and worship the true Sun Christ" (quoted by R. S. Loomis, op. cit., p. 41).

²³ Many ancient Celtic descriptions of the Otherworld emphasize the resplendently glittering character of the fairy jewels, even when they do not refer specifically to the carbuncle. In the metrical *Dinnshenchas*, composed probably during the ninth century, the woman Ailech is abducted to a beautiful house adorned with gold and gems of crystal; "alike were day and night in the midst of it" (*R.I.A.*, "Todd Lect. Series," VII, 46 f.). In the *Tain Bó Fraich*, which dates from the same period the supernatural hero's fairy gems are so bright that Queen Medb plays chess for three days continuously without noticing when night arrives (*R.C.*, XXIV, 132). In the *Togail Bruidne Dá Derga* fairy ornaments furnish sufficient light for the whole house (*ibid.*, XXII, 9 ff.). See further *ibid.*, XXI, 321. Brug na Boinne, one of the most famous Otherworld palaces of Irish romance, is frequently referred to as *brecsolus* ("flecked with light"), and a common name for the fairy realm is *Tír Sorcha* ("Land of Light"). See the word *brecsolus* in the Glossary to *Ir. Texte*, IV, 1. The word *carmocul* was apparently used occasionally in early Irish to mean simply "button" or "stud" (cf. *ibid.*, I, 39-38). This note has been contributed by Cross.

²⁴ *Ir. Texte*, I, 254, l. 16; *Fled Bricrend*, "Irish Texts Soc.," II, 3, Cf. Macalister, "Temair Breg, A study of the Remains and Traditions of Tara," *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, XXXIV (1919), 267.

²⁵ Eleanor Hull, *Cuchullin Saga* (London, 1898), p. 58; *Ztschr. f. celt. Philol.*, III (1901), 229; *Ir. Texte*, I, 309. Cross notes that luminous precious stones and

Of particular interest in this connection is *le lit merveilleux* described in the *Conte del Graal* (vss. 7666 ff.):

A chascun des quepouz del lit
Ot un escharbocle fermé
Qui gitoient molt grant clarté.

Wolfram tells us in *Parzival* (ed. Martin, II, 213 ff.)²⁶ that in the sable cap of that ever mysterious figure, the Fisher King, shone a carbuncle. A single shining carbuncle lights the Otherworld realm of Gayer which is described in the Middle English romance of *Reinbrun*²⁷ in an episode plainly influenced by Celtic tradition. In short, the tradition concerning the marvelous, sun-like carbuncle is a constant one from the oldest Irish texts through the medieval French, German, and Middle English romances which have elements springing from Celtic sources. Indeed even in 1805 the Irish Mrs. Tighe, Keats's recently discovered inspiration, was still singing of "carbuncles that pour eternal light" (*PMLA*, XLII, 972).

THE CIRCLE OF TWELVE BEDS

The description of the twelve beds for the peers about the magnificent central bed of Charlemagne seems always to have been taken as a consequence of the traditional fact that Charlemagne had twelve peers. Coulet noted that the names of the peers were chosen by an author who apparently did not know the traditional Frankish legends: first, he mingled casually the peers of the Spanish war with more recently popular heroes,²⁸ such as

carbuncles figure prominently in the decorations of the Christian Irish Otherworld in the *Fis Adamnáin* (*Ir. Texte*, I, 178); C. S. Boswell, *An Irish Precursor of Dante*, p. 31).

²⁶ Noted by Nitze, loc. cit., p. 28.

²⁷ Stanza 80 (E.E.T.S. ed.). Cf. Hibbard, *Mediaeval Romance in England*, pp. 140-42. In this episode Reinbrun swims a dreadful river, sees a castle with crystal walls, rafters of cypress, jasper posts, a great carbuncle shining above, a tree full of singing birds and learns that it is the abode of Gayer and a place where no one ever grows old. In the late twelfth-century French romance of *Le Bel Inconnu* there is an Otherworld castle built of crystal and roofed with silver:

Une escarboucle sus luissoit
Plus que solaus resplendissoit
Et par nuit rent si grant clarté
Com si ce fust en tens d'esté.

([Ed. C. Hippeau; Paris, 1869], vss. 1897 ff.)

²⁸ Coulet, p. 296.

Ogier and Guillaume d'Orange; second, he so profoundly modified²⁹ the traditional character of the noble peers that he made of them mirth for the bourgeoisie and perplexity for scholars. With Coulet's labored argument (pp. 299-364) to show that the author had in all this a serious moral purpose, this paper has nothing to do. It is enough to attempt to explain the origin of the peers in so far as the Constantinople episode of the *Pèlerinage* is concerned and to let that origin speak for itself.

Coulet (p. 294) dismissed this subject with somewhat condescending brevity: "On le considérait jadis comme un trait révélant l'origine mythique de notre épopée, et l'on voulait retrouver dans ce groupe de douze héros entourant Charlemagne des douze signes du Zodiaque tournant autour du soleil." Coulet argued that the peers came late into the Carolingian epic and could not, therefore, be a primitive feature. In discussing "le compagnonage germanique" he explained (pp. 294-96) that in the beginning this was a bond uniting two warriors only, such as Roland and Oliver, then groups of four, of seven, and at last, by process of expansion, twelve. Had Coulet investigated the matter more thoroughly, he would have found that groups of twelve in connection with a god, a king, or a hero, are far too numerous and of too great antiquity to be dismissed in such fashion.³⁰ Instead of attempting to enumerate here such groups, which we might trace from Odysseus and his twelve best men who went to encounter Polyphemus (*Odyssey* ix. 195) to the German poem *König Rother*, in which we have Rother's twelve dukes, Berchter's twelve sons, Asprian's twelve giants, we may turn to the only instance, so far as we know, in which this familiar group of one plus twelve appears in conjunction with twelve beds in a circle. It is found in the *Fled Bricrend*,³¹ in a passage immediately following the account of Conchobar's gorgeous bed and probably dating from

²⁹ Coulet, p. 299.

³⁰ A number of references are given by E. Böklen, *Die Unglückszahl Dreizehn u. ihre mythische Bedeutung* (Leipzig, 1913). A good list is given by G. Waitz, "Ueber die Zwölfzahl bei den Germanen," *Deutsche Verfassungsgesch.* (Kiel, 1865), I, App., 474-89. Cf. C. Petersen, *Das Zwölfgöttersystem der Griechen u. Römer* (Berlin, 1870), *Samml. gemeinverständlicher wissenschaftlicher Vorträge*, p. 99. The ancient Elamites had twelve (probably territorial) gods. The Hebrews had their twelve tribes from which a Council of Twelve were chosen: Josh. 4:2 Num. 1:44, "the princes of Israel, being twelve men, each one for the house of his fathers." In South American mythology and ritual, groups of twelve gods, of twelve pests, like the twelve Salii of Rome, are not common.

³¹ "Irish Texts Soc.," II, 5.

the eighth century.³² "Around it [the bed] were placed the twelve couches of the twelve heroes of Ulster." So also in the *Tochmarc Emire* it is stated: "The couch of Conchobar was in the front of the house. It had pillars [?] of silver, with posts of bronze with golden lustre on their ends and carbuncles in them. . . . The twelve couches of the twelve heroes were around the couch."³³

Whatever be the relation of these two passages to each other,³⁴ it is evident that they are identical in idea with the *Pèlerinage*. The descriptions of primitive sleeping arrangements³⁵ as they survive in traditional tales do not resemble these accounts of the couches of Conchobar and his champions. The *Triclinium aux onze lits* to which Gaston Paris (*Rom.*, IX, 12), believing that the fantastic glories of Hugo's palace were merely imaginative extensions of the actualities of the imperial palace at Constantinople, attempted to refer the arrangement of Charlemagne and his twelve does not, in number or in arrangement, suit the case at all.³⁶ The two Irish passages offer the only absolute prototype for the peers' twelve couches around that of Charlemagne. If all the other clues which we have been tracing, clues which connect Hugo's palace with the Celtic Otherworld, were disregarded, this single unmistakable parallel would remain and call for explanation.

An objection might be raised by those who find in the Christian group of Christ and the Twelve Apostles a sufficient explanation for every other similar group, whether found in ostensibly pagan sources or not. It might, for example, be claimed that Christian scribes interpolated their own favorite group number, and it has in consequence no non-Christian significance. So, on this basis, perhaps would be explained Conchobar's twelve, and

³² Cf. Thurneysen, *Irische Helden- u. Königsage* (Halle, 1921), p. 449.

³³ LU, *Facs.*, p. 121, col. 1, last two lines; *Ztschr. f. celt. Philol.*, III (1901), 229; Hull, *Cuch. Saga*, p. 58; *Ir. Text.*, I, 309. Nitze (p. 34) and Webster (*Englische Studien*, XXXVI, 351) mentioned but did not discuss the twelve. The latter simply observed (p. 351, n. 5): "The possibility that the number twelve was a primitive feature must be admitted, for a hero with a band of twelve is not uncommon in ancient French and German romances (cf. Rajna, *Le Origini de l'Épopée française*, pp. 393, 415 ff.). Conchobar in the *Wooing of Emer* has twelve principal chariot chiefs whose beds are about his as those of the peers about Charlemagne." The interest aroused by this brief comment of Webster's was the beginning of the present piece of research.

³⁴ For a discussion of the matter, Professor Cross refers me to *Ztschr. f. celt. Philol.*, VIII (1912), 498 ff. Cf. Thurneysen, *Irische Helden- u. Königsage*, pp. 381 f.

³⁵ Cf. Schoepperle, *Tristan and Isolt*, I, 213-18.

³⁶ See Webster, pp. 365-66.

so, somewhat more legitimately, would be explained Charlemagne's twelve. This group, so Frankish tradition³⁷ assures us, was actually created in remembrance of the Twelve Apostles, and in the Jerusalem episode we are told that Charlemagne and his peers, coming to the cathedral church, found there the altar at which Christ and the Apostles had chanted the Mass.³⁸ Their twelve seats were still there, and in a locked inclosure was the thirteenth. In this Charlemagne sat down where no man had ever sat before nor will again. His peers sat in the twelve seats. The twelve beds in a circle in Constantinople would then be considered simply an imitation, so to speak, of the twelve chairs in Jerusalem. Let us consider this last matter first.

Even so patriotic a student of the *Pèlerinage* as Coulet has recognized that the Jerusalem episode, though it provides ostensibly, in Charlemagne's acquisition of relics, the *raison d'être* of the poem, is in the nature of an interruption to the true story. In the very first episode of the poem Charlemagne was inspired by his wife's boast of a rival to his grandeur to go to seek that rival. It is essentially the same situation, as Webster pointed out (pp. 341, 347), that we find in such Arthurian legends as *Diu Crône* and the ballad of *King Arthur and King Cornwall*. In these the narrative pattern is unmistakable; the reproving Wife's Boast is followed by the Husband's Quest and the Encounter with his Rival. The Constantinople episode is therefore an original part of the story; the Jerusalem episode an added, a secondary feature. If this be so, if, in addition, it can be shown that Charlemagne's heroes, in number, in character, even in the arrangement of their beds, have prototypes in absolutely non-Christian tradition, it will become apparent that in the Constantinople episode the story-teller was duplicating nothing in the Jerusalem episode. He was following a story of an Otherworld journey in which

³⁷ Gautier (*Chanson de Roland*, II, 73-75) set forth his reasons for not believing Paris' assertion that the idea of the Twelve Peers was not a primitive feature in French poetry. However that may be, they certainly appear in the earliest extant *chansons de geste*. Cf. the *Chanson de Roland*, ed. Jenkins, vs. 793, note.

³⁸ Paris (*Rom.*, IX, 21-22) discusses the poet's confusion of the Church of the Holy Paternoster on the Mount of Olives, a place from which he borrowed the idea of "l'autel de sainte Paternostre," with the church of Holy Sion on Mount Sion. This was supposedly the site of the house where Christ partook of the Last Supper. A table was long exhibited there, and a painting, or possibly a mosaic, represented the scene. Pilgrim reports of these things may well have inspired the poet's story of the chairs. Cf. Titus Tobler, *Descriptiones terrae sanctae* (Leipzig, 1874), pp. 103, 136, 198, 222.

were already integrated the Wife's Boast, the Husband's Quest, a King with Twelve Champions, and a palace of incredible splendor in which the King's couch or throne was surrounded by those of Twelve Champions whose special character it was to boast tremendously and to perform tremendous feats of valor.

THE CELTIC TWELVE

It is evident that the first crux of this matter is the nature of Conchobar's Twelve. Were they introduced by Christian scribes along with the information that Conchobar was born and died at the same hour as Christ?³⁹ Fortunately at this point we can turn to unimpeachable evidence offered by *Christian* Irish writers as to the *pagan* Irish cult of the Twelve, a worship which these Christian writers regarded with horror and detestation.

The evidence in question comes from two descriptions concerning the destruction by St. Patrick of the terrible idol god, Cromm Cruaich. The first is from the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*:

Thereafter Patrick went over the water to Mag Slecht, a place in which was the chief idol of Ireland, namely Cenn Cruaich, covered with gold and silver, and twelve other idols covered with brass about him. When Patrick saw the idol from the water named Guthard (he uplifted his voice) and when he drew nigh to the idol he raised up his hand to put Jesu's staff upon it, and reached it not, but . . . its right side, for to the south was its face, namely to Tara.⁴⁰

The second is from the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth stanzas of the Rennes *Dinnshenchas*:

Stone idols old

Ranked round Cromm Cruach, four times three,
They were of stone but he of gold,
The hosts deceiving bitterly.

From Eremon,

The gracious founder of our race,
Till Patrick came, they served a stone,
And worshipped it within that place.

³⁹ Kuno Meyer, *Death Tales of the Ulster Heroes* (Dublin, 1906), pp. 9, 17; *Rev. Celt.*, V, 180.

⁴⁰ "Rolls Series," I, 93.

With heavy maul

He smashed the paltry gods each one,
With valorous blows destroyed them all,
Nor left a fragment 'neath the sun.⁴¹

Stripped of all possibly adventitious detail these descriptions bring clearly before us a circle of stones dominated by another which, if archaeology knows and proves anything at all, is one of the most common monumental forms left to us by pagan Celtic antiquity. Their actual use, their specific meaning, we can in general only surmise, but about one, once existent, we have this definite statement: The stones represented the idol god, Cromm Cruaich, and twelve lesser gods. Though the historicity of the details concerning St. Patrick's smashing in person Cromm and his circle may be doubted, there can be no doubt about the circle itself. Indeed its very site has been determined through the acute study by J. P. Dalton⁴² of the topography about Magh Sleacht and the topographical allusions in the texts cited to the place of Cromm Cruaich's worship: he has even traced some strange survivals of Cromm's cult into modern times.⁴³ Since Dalton did not, however, concern himself specifically with the number of stones about Cromm Cruaich, and since considerable misconception exists as to the importance of the number twelve among the ancient Celts, it seems well to assemble some evidence on this point even though the precise statements that there were twelve stones about Cromm speak convincingly for themselves.

In an authoritative article on "Numbers" in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* the writer on Celtic numbers speaks of the primary importance of three and nine in the numerous

⁴¹ R. A. S. Macalister, *Ireland in pre-Christian Times* (Dublin, 1921), p. 295; for Irish text and translation, see Meyer, *Voyage of Bran*, II, 305.

⁴² "Cromm Cruaich of Magh Sleacht," *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, XXXVI (1922), 23-67. Dalton identifies the hill of Darraugh, still crowned by an ancient rath, as the site of Cromm's worship. The hill is in county Cavan on the way from Templeport to the little village of Ballymagauran. See also Stokes, *Rev Celt.*, XVI, 36.

⁴³ While "later legends associate Cromm with the saints and make him their friend and helper, still . . . in many quarters he remained sole hero of the Lugnasad celebrations. The day of Cromm Dubh, an alias for Cromm Cruaich, was celebrated on the last Sunday in July, called Garland Sunday. . . . Black Cromm's Sunday stood out so prominently in the national calendar that the 'Four Masters' used it as a date mark when recording a murderous attack made in 1117" (Dalton, pp. 49-56). "In Magh Sleacht itself the last Sunday in July still attracts a large gathering to St. Patrick's Well at Bollaheenan" (p. 52). See also T. J. Westropp, "The Mound of the Fiana," *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, XXXVI, Sec. C, pp. 68-85.

triadic details of Celtic story, of seven as being in comparison of little importance; "for other numbers there is little evidence." He mentions the case of Cromm and his twelve "as an isolated case." The veteran Celtist, Joseph Loth,⁴⁴ has little to say of twelve in comparison with three, seven, nine, fifty, etc. Yet actually the importance of twelve among the Celts is witnessed by very ancient and impressive testimony. Strabo in the first century after Christ tells of the three tribes of the Galatians, a Celtic people, each tribe divided into four parts called "tetrarchies," of the great Council of the Twelve Tetrarchs and others who assembled with them.⁴⁵ In the *Crith Gablach*, an Irish law-code perhaps of the eighth century, it is stated: "Twelve [men] are the King's company. . . . Twelve couches (*immdai*) are in the royal house. . . . Twelve now are the retinue of a bishop. . . . The company of the Suad [or Sai, title of the class of literary men] now is twelve men."⁴⁶ The influence of the importance of this number, whatever it implied, is to be traced in the extant plans and descriptions of the royal palaces at Tara and at Emain Macha. In them we have twelve couches, twelve windows, twelve doors,⁴⁷ which have obvious connection with the twelve champions of the king. From these indications it would seem clear that among the ancient Celts the number twelve was in law, in society, in royal household arrangements, a number of importance. Of special importance also must have been the ancient Irish cult of the Twelve Gods which is attested by the two texts describing the worship of Cromm Cruaich himself.

The reason for all this was doubtless precisely the same reason that has from time to time, among the most widely separated

⁴⁴ "L'Année celtique d'après les textes irlandais," *Rev. celt.*, XXV (1904), 157. He grants, however (p. 146), "que ce chiffre ait eu une réelle valeur mythique, à un certain moment, chez les Celtes."

⁴⁵ *Geography*, XII, 5 (trans. Hamilton and Falconer [1856], II, 320.

⁴⁶ *Ancient Laws of Ireland*, "Rolls Series," IV, 329, 337, 339.

⁴⁷ The doors are sometimes said to be "twelve or fourteen" but only twelve appear on the extant plans. Cf. Macalister's discussion of this and other architectural points in his "Temair Breg, A Study of the Remains and Traditions of Tara," *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, XXXIV (1919), 231-399, esp. p. 264. The descriptions of the glories of Tara in the *Metrical Dinnsenchas* (Gwynn, "Todd Lecture Series," *Roy. Irish Acad.*, 1903) and in a prose tract of the same subject (Gwynn, p. 71, n. 103) were both undoubtedly influenced in numerical matters by the account of Solomon's Temple (I Kings, chaps. 6, 7). The Irish accounts, however, borrowed nothing from the description of the great "sea" erected by Solomon in the Temple court. It was mounted on twelve brazen oxen, three of which looked toward each of the four quarters.

peoples, and in the most divergent periods of time, produced the cult of the one great and twelve lesser gods, or influenced the current idea of the one great and twelve lesser heroes, judges, relatives, etc. The evidence for the Cosmic Twelve cannot, however, be touched on in this paper, which has to do only with the Celtic development of what can almost be called a world-wide phenomenon. That the Celtic cult of the one god encircled by twelve others influenced the concept of the king encircled by his twelve heroes no one can doubt, especially as Conchobar is notably in Irish tradition either a euhemerized deity or a deified king. Indeed a gloss in the oldest version of the *Fled Bricrend* calls Conchobar *día talmaide*, or “terrestrial god [of the Ultonians].”⁴⁸

The twelve champions about Conchobar are not specifically named, in conjunction with the number, in the old texts, but their pre-eminence is asserted, and it can hardly be doubted that such a statement as the following, though it is found in an eighteenth-century version of the *Training of Cuchulainn* (*Revue celt.*, XXIX, 147), represents an ancient tradition:

Authors and sages recount that no king or great lord on the Continent had at that time heroes . . . as brave . . . as the band that was then in Ulster called the Champions of the Red Branch, such as Conall the Victorious, and Fergus son of Ross Ruad, and with their children, Loegaire the Triumphant, Cormac Conloinges, son of Conchobar, and those eight others who came with Cuchulainn into Ireland.

Though this is the most famous group of twelve heroes known to Irish story, the same group number is given with reference to “that famous warrior, Lugaid Noes, son of Alamacc, king of Munster, who went from the west and twelve underkings of Munster with him, to woo the twelve daughters of Corpre Niafer” (*Tochmarc Emire*, *Revue celt.*, XI, 449). The same group survives even in modern Irish folk tale, as in this Galway story of *The Knight of the Tricks*, recorded by Douglas Hyde:

“Supper was got ready for them, as good as he had it, and when the supper was eaten, the Knight asked these twelve (who were with him) to rise up and perform a piece of exercise for this man, showing

⁴⁸ LU., *Facs.*, p. 101, col. 2, l. 8. Cf. “Irish Texts Soc.,” II, 16, where, Professor Cross notes, the phrase is transcribed incorrectly. See further Hull, *Cuch Saga*, p. lvi.

the deeds they had, and this man had never seen any feat like them.”⁴⁹ Or again (p. 23): “When they were after their supper, the Knight of the Tricks told the twelve to rise up and perform feats for the gentleman who was giving them their supper.”

The evidence that has been here assembled surely justifies us in henceforth referring to the Celtic Twelve, which begin, so far as we know, with the god Cromm and his twelve. That Conchobar’s twelve, like Charlemagne’s, lie in a carbuncle lighted room, that their beds encircle one central bed more magnificent than all, is a correspondence which no one can attribute to chance. It can be accounted for only as a genuine survival of Celtic tradition in French romance.⁵⁰ Lineally, then, the Twelve Peers of the Constantinople episode are the “wild Irish,” the madly heroic champions of Conchobar, and in this lies the explanation for their variation from the Twelve Peers of Frankish tradition. Perhaps it was the very identity of the number that led to the equation and brought about the mingling of two entirely different lines of tradition.

⁴⁹ *Five Irish Stories* (Dublin), pp. 22 ff.

⁵⁰ See my article, “Arthurian Tombs and Megalithic Monuments.” *Mod. Lang. Rev.*, XXVI (1931), 408-26.

THE ROUND TABLE AGAIN*

IN an article on "Arthur's Round Table" (*PMLA* xli [1926] 771 ff.) and in another on "The Table of the Last Supper in Religious and Secular Iconography" (*Art Studies* [1927]) the evidence was set forth that from the end of the first century until the twelfth the table of the Last Supper was regularly represented as round, so regularly in fact that no certain example of this scene with the straight table can be found in European art before 1000.¹ The evidence in question was drawn from all the different media of medieval art,—illuminations, frescoes, mosaics, ivories,—and from practically all parts of Europe. It seemed, therefore, to offer a legitimate basis for the conclusion that this pictured round table of Christ, which differed so conspicuously from the actual straight trestle table of ordinary medieval usage, must have acquired a special significance, a special association with the holiest, to the Christian mind, of human fellowships. In this was found the explanation for its transference to Arthur when the exploitation of Arthur, as the greatest of Christian kings, the rival of Charlemagne, became the business of twelfth-century story-tellers. The attempt to present new evidence and to answer certain queries and objections will, it is hoped, bring about some further elucidation of the problem.

The new evidence is not archaeological in character but comes entirely from historical facts and documents. So far as

* From *Modern Language Notes*, XLIV (1929), 511-19.

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¹ *Art Studies*, V, p. 82. Philological agreement with the archaeological evidence is afforded by such a study of the European words derived from *mensa* and *discus* as that of R. Meringer, *Sitzungsberichte d. K. Akad. d. Wissensch. in Wien*, 1901, pp. 73-85. Professor Meyer-Lübke, to whom I am indebted for this reference, believes that *tabula* and its derivatives replaced *mensa* in various Romance languages because it was used with reference to the trestle table with removable top, the "board" of the English, which was the type of table in common use.

literature is concerned we need remember only the undeniable facts that in the metrical *Joseph d'Armathie* the Grail table, and in the prose *Merlin* the Round Table, are definitely associated with the table of the Last Supper.² If this was done at the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century by the authors of these texts, there is no inherent improbability in supposing that some one else might have made the same association in the early years of the twelfth century. More particularly the assumption will seem probable if it can be established that numerous Bretons in the eleventh century had opportunity to know at first hand the holy relic that in Jerusalem was exhibited as the table of the Last Supper.

Fist Artus la Roonde Table
Dont Breton dient mainte fable.

In these famous lines Wace for the first time refers to the table of Arthur. Now it should be clear that contemporary Bretons of Wace's own day, no matter how much of pagan Celtic lore they had preserved or acquired, were no less Christian than Wace himself and no less concerned, in any glorification of Arthur, to present him, as Nennius had done in Wales, as Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace himself were doing, as the glorious Christian hero or king. Since the sixth century the Bretons had been, and for that matter still are, among the most devout members of the Catholic Church. They had numerous and richly endowed churches³ in which, unless these differed from all other European churches, there were frescoes and illuminated Gospels in which one of the most famous episodes of Christian tradition, the institution of the Eucharist, must have been represented.

But the possibility is less interesting than the evidence for the actual journeys of eleventh-century Bretons, to Jerusalem and Rome, where, as will presently be shown, they could have seen with their own eyes, or have heard numerous accounts of the famous *mensa rotunda Christi*.

In 1008 Duke Geoffroi of Brittany went to Rome to pray at the tomb of the apostles and there is some slight reason to

² *Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal*, ed. Nitze (Paris, 1927), v. 2491; Huth *Merlin*, ed. Paris, I, 95; Vulgate *Lestoire de Merlin*, ed. Sommer, II, 53-54.

³ Arthur de la Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, II, ch. 12; II, p. 14, gifts to Rennes; p. 26, to Cathedral de St. Corentin; p. 32 to Quimperlé, to Rennes; p. 33 to Lohéac, etc.

believe he even went on to Jerusalem.⁴ A few years later Bishop Gautier of Nantes made the Jerusalem journey.⁵ Of far greater importance was the departure in 1096 of Alain Fergant and a "notable list of Bretons" on the First Crusade.⁶ Going to Italy, stopping at Bari, where it seems probable that, in regaling themselves with stories of Arthur and Guinevere, they gave the clue to the sculptor who carved the Arthurian archivolt of Modena Cathedral,⁷ they at last went on to the Holy Land, where they fought for five years. Some of them were certainly present on that day of days when the Crusaders rushed through the blood-stained streets of Jerusalem and, as an eyewitness, the author of the *Gesta Francorum* (ed. B. A. Lees [1924], p. 90, 143) describes it:

Venerunt autem omnes nostri gaudentes et prae nimio gaudio plorantes ad nostri Saluatoris Iesu Sepulchrum adorandum.

In the *Historia Hierosolimitana*, written between 1106 and 1107 by Archbishop Baudri of Dol,⁸ there are specific references to the sanctity of the place associated with the last Supper. In describing the siege of Jerusalem (ed. Migne, *Patrologia*, v. 166, col. 1139) he wrote: "a meridie obsedit eam comes Sancti Ægidii, videlicet in monte Sion, circa ecclesiam beatissimae Dei genetricis Mariae, ubi Dominus Jesus cum suis coenavit discipulis." In another place (col. 1142) the Crusaders are exhorted to remember they are before that holy city: "in hac Christianismus Deus instituit; ex hac Christianitatis sacramentum ad nos usque emanavit." In 1101, when for the most part the Bretons came home, they brought with them not only inspired memories of the Holy Land but also actual memorials, a bit of the true Cross, a fragment of the Holy Sepulchre. On June 29 these relics in the midst of a vast concourse of people were deposited in the new church of Lohéac.⁹

From these historical details concerning the piety of eleventh

⁴ De la Borderie, III, 5; Le Baud, *Hist.*, Bibl. Nat., Ms. fr. 8266, f. 140, suggests the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

⁵ De la Borderie, III, 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 32; C. W. David, *Robert Curthose* (1920), p. 94.

⁷ R. S. Loomis, in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis* (Paris and N. Y., 1927), pp. 209-28; Kingsley Porter and R. S. Loomis, *Gaz. des Beaux Arts*, Oct. 1928, pp. 109-122.

⁸ For bibliography concerning the learned Breton and his works see P. Abrahams, *Les Oeuvres de Baudri de Bourgueil* (Paris, 1926), pp. xx-xxiv.

⁹ De la Borderie, III, 33; David, *op. cit.*, p. 227, from *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Redon*.

century Bretons and the first-hand knowledge which some of them possessed of Jerusalem itself and its holy relics, we may turn to the pilgrim literature of the Middle Ages for references to the relic known as the table of the Last Supper. One of the most important of these references was very kindly pointed out to the writer by Professor James Westfall Thompson. It is from the Itinerary of Bernard the Wise,¹⁰ a French monk who journeyed to Jerusalem about 870. In describing the Church in the Garden of Gethsemane, he wrote:

In ipso etiam loco est ecclesia in quo Dominus traditus est; habet quatuor mensas rotundas cœnæ ipsius.

In the much earlier account of Arculf,¹¹ one that dates from about 670, there is a passage which seems to indicate that even then, in a cave on Mount Olivet near the Church of St. Mary, he viewed the tables which were subsequently shown to Bernard. It reads:

In eadem ergo spelunca quatuor insunt lapideae mensae, quarum una est iuxta introitum speluncae ab intus sita domini Iesu, cui procul dubio mensulae sedes ipsius adhaeret, ubi cum duodenis apostolis simul ad alias mensas ibidem habitas sedentibus et ipse conuiuia aliquando recumbere saepe solitus erat.

Arculf was from France. On his return home he was carried by a storm to Scotland and ultimately, at Iona, told the tale of his wanderings to the holy Adamnan, who wrote down the precious narrative. This was the account known to and used by Bede.¹² In other words, as early as the seventh century we have a Frenchman, an Irishman, and an Englishman interested in the tables associated with Christ and the apostles. Bernard's account proves that these same tables, or their replicas, had by the ninth century become the tables "coenae ipsius." In a still later account, that of Sæwulf in 1102, a year later than the date at which we know Jerusalem relics were offered in Brittany by just returned Crusaders, we have the statement that the marble table on which

¹⁰ Tobler, *Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae* (Leipzig, 1874), p. 85; also in English translation, *Palestine Pilgrims' Text Soc.* (London, 1897), III, 8 (Bernard).

¹¹ *Itinera Hierosolymitana* (Adamnanus), in vol. 39, p. 242, of the *Vienna Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, 1898, also under Arculf, *Pal. Pilgrims' Texts Soc.*, III, 18.

¹² *Liber de Locis Sanctis*, *Corpus*, op. cit., 39, 323; *Pal. Pilg. Texts Soc.*, III, 87.

Christ ate His Last Supper was still shown to pilgrims.¹³ We could hardly ask for a plainer indication of the history of a relic, or a more positive proof that it was known to the special group with which we are concerned. Inspired by the sight in some cases, by the story of it in others, pious Bretons at the beginning of the twelfth century were unquestionably in a position to transfer to their hero Arthur the table that was associated with the holiest of human fellowships. In so doing they would simply be paralleling the tellers of Carolingian story who gave the Twelve Peers to Charlemagne in memory of the twelve apostles. The combination of the Christian *mensa rotunda* with Celtic Arthur would likewise be no stranger than that effected in the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, in which the Christian Emperor visits a round whirling Otherworld palace, where he lies, in precisely the manner of the legendary King Conchobar of Ireland, in a carbuncle-lighted room, on a bed surrounded by the twelve couches of his peers, yet goes from all this to bring back to St. Denis the holy relics which he had already obtained at Jerusalem.¹⁴

The theory of the Celtic origin of the Round Table has been urged so often and is held so tenaciously by some scholars,¹⁵ that it seems well to emphasize certain reasons, altogether apart from the evidence given above, which, to the present writer, at least, make it improbable that non-Christian Celtic custom or tradition had any thing to do with Wace's concept of the Round Table. Arthur's fellowship as a fighting, but not a fraternal body, the times of his great feasts, the Perilous Seat, and a number of other concepts may be admitted as probably of Celtic origin. Such concepts were attracted at various times into the legend of the Round Table precisely as stories of non-Arthurian heroes were grafted onto the cycle. But to assume that the table itself, or the ideal fraternity of its fellowship, came from Celtic sources is, it would appear, altogether unwarranted.

For one thing, the fact, and therefore, the idea of a communal table seems essentially foreign to the Celts. Sir John Rhys long ago pointed out (*Arthurian Legend*, p. 9) that there is no reference in any old Irish story to a communal table. So rarely

¹³ *Pal. Pilg. Texts Soc.*, IV (1897), p. 20, under Saewulf.

¹⁴ T. P. Cross and L. Hibbard Loomis, *Mod Phil.*, XXV (1928), 331 ff.

¹⁵ For bibliography see *PMLA*, XLI, 771-774. Cf. *Mod Phil.*, XXVI, 242; "Since the account of Wace is the oldest and since it purports to be Celtic in origin, the theory that Arthur's Round Table is of Celtic origin still has the right of way."

are tables of any sort mentioned in old Irish that O'Curry, in his *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, did not even enter the word in that General Index in which appears almost everything that pertained to their life. Joyce in his *Social History of Ancient Ireland* (1903, II, 105, 110-111), uses the words *at table* indiscriminately for *at meals*. He illustrates the small individual willow table (5 inches high, 28 inches long, 16 inches broad) found in a Tyrone bog, but admits that the people generally had no tables at all at their meals. He refers to the specific statement of Giraldus Cambrensis in his *Description of Wales*, Ch. X, that even in his twelfth-century day tables were unknown in Welsh households. This, it may be noted, is probably the reason, rather than mere chance omission, that, in the early twelfth century Welsh story of *Kulhwch and Olwen*, the Round Table, supposing that the Bretons were already telling tales of it, was not listed among the other famous possessions of Arthur. If, like the ancient Irish, the Welsh were still unfamiliar with the use of tables, it is no wonder they had nothing to say about Arthur's table.

The supposed derivation of the Round Table from pagan Celtic sources commonly rests on the evidence of Posidonius and Layamon.¹⁶ The first was a Greek, writing about 90 B.C. He told of the Celtic custom of eating in a circle at low wooden tables, of the hero's place in the middle, of the brawls over precedence at the feasts. We must note that Posidonius was here writing of Celts in Gaul, people who were considerably nearer to Roman influence than were the Celts of Ireland, Wales, or Brittany. We must also remember the fact, already noted, that in old Irish tales, however much medievalized, tables are conspicuous by their absence. However reliable as to the circle, the feasts, the brawls of the Gallic Celts, the evidence of the cultivated Greek traveller is somewhat less trustworthy, it would appear, in this manner of tables.

Layamon's account (cir. 1205) of the Founding of the Round Table is no longer believed to have been drawn from Welsh but presumably from Breton tradition.¹⁷ Its essential similarity in barbarity of manners, in turbulence of spirit, to the Old Irish stories of Fights at Feasts, was happily pointed out some years

¹⁶ A. C. L. Brown, "The Round Table before Wace," *Studies and Notes in Phil. and Lit.*, VII, 183 ff.

¹⁷ Bruce, *Evolution of Arth. Romance*, I, 84.

ago by A. C. L. Brown (*loc. cit.*). The fact that Wace, though he does not tell the story, uses the name Romarec de Guenelande (or Venelande) which appears in Layamon as Rumaret of Winetlande, would seem to suggest that Wace may likewise have known the brawl story.¹⁸ But, as the brawl story existed in Irish without the slightest mention of a table, there is no reason why it should not have done so among the Bretons. The last thing that the turbulent and tableless Irish or Welsh would have conceived of or transmitted to the Bretons was the story of a great dining-table, much less of one that put an end to fights and implied, in direct antithesis to everything that lent gusto to heroic strife for precedence, the strange and foreign ideas of peace and fraternity. For these reasons, then, it would seem unwise to continue to insist on the Celtic provenance of the Round Table whether as a table or an institution.

In his book entitled *Arthur of Britain* (1927), Sir Edmund Chambers offers, as an alternative to the theory just discussed, the possibility that *li conteor* who were fashioning Arthur's court on the model of Charlemagne's were recalling the episode in the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, where the pilgrims find the church of the Last Supper with twelve seats and in the midst a thirteenth, in which the emperor seats himself with the twelve peers about him. Apart from the fact that this account finds no corroboration in pilgrim literature, that it was apparently a mere invention of the author's, possibly inspired by a passage in the Constantinople part of his story,¹⁹ it should at least be evident that here again there is no parallel for a table, round or otherwise, nor for the concept of equal fraternity. In short, the passage has no significance whatever for the Arthurian Round Table.

In conclusion, however, a tentative suggestion may be offered, which perhaps explains the linking of such divergent concepts as those associated with Christ and with Celtic Arthur. The association was not made, it would seem, because popular tradition had endowed Arthur with a table, magic, or round or anything else, but because he, like Christ, and like many heroes of classic and especially of pagan Celtic antiquity, may have been connected with a fellowship of twelve. The pre-Christian groups of Twelves are almost overwhelming in their number and diversity.

¹⁸ Brown, *loc. cit.*, p. 201.

¹⁹ *Mod. Phil.*, XXV, 344.

In my recent article on the *Pèlerinage Charlemagne*, some of the evidence for the pagan Celtic Twelve was indicated. In Arthurian romance this same group fellowship appears, as the writer hopes shortly to point out elsewhere, in an extraordinary number of instances, which, short of actual parody, can have no relation to the Christian Twelve. Like the old Irish god, Cromm Cruaich with his twelve subordinate deities, like King Conchobar with his twelve chief heroes of Ulster, like Lugaid Noes with his twelve underkings of Munster, like Finn and the twelve men "that used to be with Finn in his house,"²⁰ it is possible that Celtic Arthur was connected with groups of twelve, the same Arthur who was supposed by Nennius to have fought twelve Herculean battles and in the Merlin romances to have slain twelve pagan kings. The Grail romances refer not infrequently to the twelve knights of the Round Table, a bit of evidence which one might discount, were it not for the pagan Celtic Twelve and their persistence in various Arthurian romances and likewise, it would seem, in the *Pèlerinage Charlemagne*. Since in old Irish tales the ancient and possibly mythic number twelve was sometimes displaced by favorite triadic numbers such as thrice fifty, since in such obviously Christianized romances as Robert de Boron's *Merlin*, the author deliberately changed the number of seats at the Round Table, avowedly made in commemoration of the Apostolic table, to fifty, it can occasion no surprise that the number of Arthur's fellowship varied from twelve to fifty, to thrice fifty, and even, in Layamon's account, became sixteen hundred. The supposition that Arthur, like these other heroes of Celtic legend that have just been enumerated, was once associated with an entirely non-Christian group of twelve, cannot, of course, be proved, but, in view of such evidence as there is, it cannot be too lightly dismissed. In the Huth *Merlin* (I, 262) and in Malory (II, c. 10), who used the same source, twelve rebel kings are slain by Arthur; in the Vulgate *Merlin* (ed. Sommer, II, 387, 408) the twelve became his friends and subjects and shared in the feast with him, as did King Conchobar's twelve Ultonian heroes. Since it appears that even the *Pèlerinage Charlemagne*, in the Constantinople episode,²¹ shows the influence of this particular Irish group and

²⁰ For the Finn reference see "Fianaigecht," ed. Meyer. *Roy. Ir. Acad. Todd Lecture Series*, XVI (1910), 79; for the others *Mod. Phil.*, XXV, 345 ff.

²¹ "That Conchobar's twelve, like Charlemagne's, lie in a carbuncle-lighted

of other heroes as truculent, it is the more likely that Arthurian traditions, flowing so much more directly from Celtic sources, preserved likewise some reminiscence of the Celtic Twelve, the gods and heroes of Celtic heathendom.

room, that their beds encircle one more magnificent than all, is a correspondence no one can attribute to chance." *Mod. Phil.*, XXV, 349. The whirling round palace, the Otherworld landscape, the gabs and feats of the Twelve Peers, were all, probably, in the Constantinople episode.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH AND STONEHENGE*

IN Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (VIII, ix-xii) occurs the oldest and almost the only known legend¹ about the most famous megalithic monument in Britain. The story accounts for Stonehenge as the funeral monument erected for hundreds of noble Britons slain by the treacherous Hengist and his Saxons, and it was for centuries accepted as the historical explanation of that great structure. Chroniclers² repeated the tale and successive generations believed, to borrow Spenser's wording, that they could

"Th'eternall marks of treason . . . at Stonheng vew." (*F. Q.*, II, x, 66).

Not until the nineteenth century did there finally emerge from the enormous mass of theorizing³ always current about Stonehenge,

* From *PMLA*, XLV (1930), pp. 400-415.

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¹ E. H. Stone, *The Stones of Stonehenge*, London, 1924, p. 140, quotes the story first published by John Wood, *Choir Gaure*, 1724, and repeated in *A Voice from Stonehenge* compiled by J. Easton, Salisbury, 1821, 1826, which tells of Merlin's desire to have "the Parcel of Stones which grew in an odd sort of Form in a Back-side belonging to an old Woman in Ireland," of his employment of the Devil who dressed as a gentleman and offered the old woman as much money as she could count "while he should be taking them away." Stone, p. 141, thinks this story originated with Gaffer Hunt of Ambresbury, a venerable old man with whom Wood lodged. In its reference to Merlin and Ireland the story is reminiscent of Geoffrey of Monmouth's legend of Stonehenge but is otherwise entirely independent. The Devil in Wood's story was supposed to have bound up the stones and in an instant have transported them to Salisbury Plain. He appears similarly in many other megalithic folktales. Cf. P. Sébillot, *Traditions . . . de la Haute-Bretagne*, Paris, 1882, I, 20 ff.

² Cf. R. H. Fletcher, *Arthurian Material in the Chronicles*, Boston, 1906, Index.

³ For a witty summary of some of the theories propounded in the thousand and more books and articles on Stonehenge see A. H. Allcroft, "The Age of Stonehenge," *Nineteenth Century*, 1920, pp. 678 ff. "Stonehenge," he says, "has been assigned to

the conviction that the monument was prehistoric and that Geoffrey's narrative was fantastic fiction. Arthurian scholars with few exceptions have ignored it. But certain comparatively recent discoveries about Stonehenge itself, the gradual accumulation of megalithic folklore,⁴ which alone can explain some of the more curious aspects of the legend, the quickening interest of scholars in the traditional materials used by Geoffrey, all combine to give at last a new importance to the old story. Told by a Breton, frankly partisan in its laudation of noble Britons at the expense of perfidious Saxons, the story at the outset bespeaks its origin in Celtic tradition. What that tradition was we can in part determine by the Celtic folklore that has come down to us, some of it in texts older than Geoffrey or contemporary with him and much of it surviving to the present day in connection with those other stone circles and megalithic remains which still can be seen in Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and western Scotland.

Incredible as seems the legend of Merlin's transportation of the mighty stones to Salisbury Plain, Geoffrey's description of the structure itself and its purpose is actually, in comparison with the later accounts of Druid-mad antiquarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,⁵ sober, even in some ways rational. The amazing Druids, the serpent temple, and other inventions of a Stukeley (1740-1743) are altogether lacking. Geoffrey's *Historia* implies or states the following more or less factual elements: (1) Stonehenge was a great stone circle called the Giants' Dance; (2) it was used for a funerary monument though not originally erected for that purpose; (3) it was built of stones that were Stones of Worship, *Mystici Lapides*, (4) stones that were brought from afar; and (5) it was related in some way to the stone circles in Africa and Ireland. Since these statements or implications can

almost every people from Dan unto Denmark, to every date between Cheops and Canute.—It stands as the Tower of Confusion of English archaeology." For a bibliography of Stonehenge see *The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, Dec. 1901.

⁴ For modern studies see in particular P. Sébillot, *Le Folk-Lore de France*, Paris, 1904, I, 300-58; *Traditions . . . de la Haute-Bretagne*, ch. 1-2; W. Johnson, *Folk Memory*, Oxford, 1908 (Index); Ritchie, "Folklore of the Aberdeenshire Stone Circles," *Proc. Soc. Antiq. of Scotland*, Ser. V (1926) XII, 304 ff.; S. Reinach, "Les monuments de pierre brute dans le langage et les croyances populaires," *Rev. Arch.*, XXX (1893), 195 ff.; A. J. Evans, "The Rollright Stones and their Folklore," *Folk-Lore*, V (1895), 6 ff.; A. J. Evans, *Archaeological Review*, London, 1889, "Stonehenge," II, 312-330.

⁵ Cf. T. D. Kendrick, *The Druids*, London, 1927, pp. 4-17; G. F. Black, *Druids and Druidism*, New York Public Library, 1920, for an invaluable bibliography.

now be shown to correspond to other megalithic legends or to certain facts known only in modern times in regard to megaliths in general and to Stonehenge in particular, it is evident that they could not have been invented by Geoffrey⁶ but must have been known to him through antecedent tradition.

The ascription of Stonehenge to the giants is the most obvious bit of folklore in the story. To this day all over Western Europe megalithic remains and primitive earthworks are described by the peasantry as the work of giants or of some particular gigantic race or creature. The Celtic peasants still make this ascription. In his exhaustive work on *The Dolmens of Ireland* (London, 1897, Index, vol. III) William C. Borlase gives an amazing number of instances of stones called the Giant's Bed, Barrow, Grave, Table, Load, etc., known in Ireland itself and elsewhere in Europe. Another long list is given by Salomon Reinach, *Les Cultes, Mythes et Religions* (Paris, 1908, III, 376 ff.). In old Irish literature the same habit of ascribing to the Tuatha De Danaan or to the Fiana the various types of prehistoric structures can be abundantly illustrated. In the *Acallamh na Senorach* (*Colloquy of the Ancients*),⁷ for instance, a text that dates from the middle of Geoffrey's own century⁸ and is a rich mine of antiquarian lore, there is constant reference to ancient cairns,⁹ tumuli,¹⁰ barrows, ¹¹ pillar stones¹² erected by or for those huge

⁶ The prevailing earlier opinion of Geoffrey's story is thus expressed by Fletcher, *Arthurian Material in the Chronicles*, p. 93, n. 3: "That Geoffrey had any definite basis for most of the details included in this episode no one has ever shown, though Rhys had a theory to account for some of them." Rhys, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1886, *Celtic Heathendom*, 2nd edition, 1892, 192 ff., believed "that Stonehenge belonged to the Celtic Zeus whose later legendary self we have in Merlin." Apart from conjectures, Rhys called attention to the stone circle found by Diarmait in the story of the *Gilla Decair* and to the stone circle described in the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*. See below, n. 42.

⁷ Edited by Whitley Stokes, *Irische Texte*, IV (1900), with translation, pp. 225-271, of the parts omitted in the translation by S. O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, London, 1892, II, 101-265.

⁸ R. Thurneysen, *Die irische Helden- u. Königsage*, Halle, 1921, p. 48, dates the *Colloquy* between 1142 and 1200.

⁹ O'Grady, pp. 153, 163, 193, 259; Stokes, p. 58, 67, 208.

¹⁰ Called the green sepulchral mounds, the sod-built earth hills: O'Grady pp. 126, 140, 178, 188, 189, 261; Stokes, p. 227, 252.

¹¹ Called graves, excavations in the earth, etc., O'Grady, pp. 172, 175 (where four hundred were buried together), 181, 183.

¹² O'Grady, pp. 129, "three huge pillar stones," 170 "the pillar stone of Usnach," 181 the "monumental stones of the Fiana," 183, 255, "the three men's pillar-stones" described on p. 256 as three "monoliths." The *Lia in imracail*, a royal pillar stone, is described (Stokes, p. 270) as "a huge mass of rock." For "stones over graves"

Fiana of whom it was said in this very text that in the skull of one of them the biggest man of the assembly might sit; likewise that through one of their spear sockets a man might pass his knee.¹³ Their feats of lifting great stones were said to be gigantic.¹⁴ In asserting that originally the giants made Stonehenge, Geoffrey was, therefore, following a tradition as familiar to the Celts as to other peoples in regard to all such megalithic structures.

Despite the defacement wrought by centuries Stonehenge is to this day more easily described as a stone circle than anything else.¹⁵ Within a great outer ring of earthwork, which somewhat resembles various Giants' Rings in Ireland¹⁶ and elsewhere, there are still at least two concentric stone circles. Whether Geoffrey knew by observation or report that the stones set "circa plateam" were in a circle we can but guess; we can only be certain that the name he gave it, *Chorea Gigantum*,¹⁷ was suggested by tradition.

see Stokes, p. 225 (O'Grady, p. 122), p. 90 (O'Grady, p. 181), p. 252. Borlase, *Dolmens*, 111, 785, notes that many great rocks are still similarly ascribed to the Fiana. "Lackaneen, a circle in (Meath) is perhaps Lacka na bh-Fian, "Flag-stones of the Fians." Dolmens in Ireland are constantly described as the beds or graves of the mythic figures of antiquity. Cf. Eleanor Hull, *Folk-Lore*, XXXVII (1927), 244, ff.

¹³ Stokes, pp. 58-59, 226; O'Grady, p. 154. The huge skull mentioned was said to be that of Garbdaire. One colossal grave of the "ancients" is described in the *Colloquy* (O'Grady, p. 154) as being seven score feet in length and twenty-eight in width.

¹⁴ Three of the Fiana, even in their old age, were able to lift one of the mighty stones of a great tomb (O'Grady, p. 156). The old Cailte of the Fiana could lift a stone four hundred ordinary men vainly tried to move (O'Grady, p. 172).

¹⁵ In his authoritative archaeological work on *The Stones of Stonehenge*, already cited, Stone states (p. 34): "Except that the peristyle of Stonehenge happens to be circular in plan there is absolutely nothing about this highly specialized design which has anything in common with the stone circle." But the exaggeration of this remark is obvious even if one confines one's self to Stone's own description (p. 1) of Stonehenge as consisting of four series of stones: "1, An Outer Circle of Sarsen stones; 2, An Inner Circle of blue stones; 3, Five great trilithons—somewhat in horse-shoe shaped; 4, An inner horseshoe of blue stones."

¹⁶ Cf. Borlase, *Dolmens*, I, 275, Fig. 257; R. A. S. Macalister, *Archaeology of Ireland*, Dublin, 1928, p. 106. The earthring about Stonehenge is best shown in an aerial photograph, *Archæologia*, LX (1907), Part II, Pl. LXX, p. 571. The earliest known print of Stonehenge, reproduced by Stone, *Stonehenge*, Pl. 36, from a Dutch manuscript of 1574, illustrates in remarkable fashion the artist's conception of Stonehenge as a stone circle.

¹⁷ In the Welsh versions of the *Historia* the phrase *cor y ceuri* preserves the primary meaning of *cor*, "circle of the giants" (Griscom, p. 432, n.). On *cor* as a Celtic word see J. Loth, *Rev. Celt.*, XLIV (1927), 272-81. Celtic *cor* and Latin *coraula* had by the 12th century acquired the sense of *dance*. See U. T. Holmes, *Language*, IV (1928), 29, 202, who connects OF *caroler* with Breton *coroll*. Cf. Wace, 8383. "Breton les solent *en bretan* Apeler Karole as gaires." Of course Geoffrey's *Chorea*

In both medieval and modern folklore prehistoric stone circles are commonly believed to represent dancers metamorphosed into stone because of their impiety in dancing on a holy day. The Weddings at Stanton Drew, Somerset,¹⁸ the Dawns Men (Stone Dance) of Cornwall,¹⁹ the Piper's Dance or Stones at the Irish Hollywood, County Wicklow,²⁰ the Steintanz of Boitin,²¹ or that at Wulfsbruchen,²² Germany, "les demoiselles de Langon" in France,²³ all illustrate the same type of tradition. Geoffrey's *Chorea*, applied to Stonehenge possibly implies the same belief though without the usual touch of Christian piety. In this respect it would correspond rather to those French circles known as "la ronde des fées" or "le bal des dames."²⁴ We can but speculate in general as to whether the circular position of the stones suggested a round dance or ring, or whether the medieval dance stories were inspired by the memory or the actual persistence of dances within the ancient stone circles. Pagan dances about a menhir were observed by St. Sampson in Cornwall in the fifth century.²⁵ Since, from that day to this, dancing about megalithic monuments has continued, as M. Sébillot in *Le Paganisme Contemporain*²⁶ has amply shown, there is no inherent improbability in supposing that even within historic times dances may have been celebrated in Stonehenge which by association left the name *Chorea* to the great circle. But whether the name originated in some such dim traditional association or through the belief that the stones represented dancers transformed or through the belief that even today

meant dance. In the earliest version of the story of the Accursed Dancers, the group is referred to as "famosa illa chorea." This version is in the works of Lambert of Hersfeld, d. 1083 (Herbert, *Cat. of Romances*, III, 283). In referring to this story William of Malmesbury (*De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, Rolls Series I, 204), uses *Chorea* in this sense.

¹⁸ *Archaeological Journal*, XV (1858) 204; *Victoria County Hist. of Somerset*, p. 191; *Somerset Arch. and Natural Hist. Soc.* XIV, II, 161; Dymond, *Stanton Drew*, 1896.

¹⁹ *Victoria County Hist. of Cornwall*, I, p. 380 and Plate.

²⁰ R. A. S. Macalister, *Ireland in Pre-Celtic Times*, 1921, p. 294, Fig. 100.

²¹ Borlase, *Dolmens*, II, 592, Fig. 474.

²² Noted in *Victoria County Hist. of Cornwall*, p. 383.

²³ Reinach, *Cultes*, III, 374, 423; Bézier, *Inventaire des monuments mégalith. d'Ille-et-Vilaine*, p. 163, also Pl. XXII. Sébillot, *Le Folk-Lore de France*, IV, 12 ff.

²⁴ Reinach, III, 377; Boisvilette, *Statistique archéol. d'Eure-et-Loire*, p. 59.

²⁵ The text and translation of the Life of St. Sampson are given by T. Taylor, *Celtic Christianity in Cornwall*, London, 1916, p. 33; P. Sébillot, *Le paganisme contemporain chez les peuples Celto-Latins*, Paris, 1908, p. 310.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 39, 79, 251. See also Eleanor Hull, *Folklore of the British Isles*, London, 1928, p. 96.

is still current that megalithic stones could themselves move and dance,²⁷ is of relative unimportance. The name *Chorea* bears no relation whatsoever to Geoffrey's subsequent account of Stonehenge as a funeral monument. Since he in no way explains the name that was in such peculiar contradiction to his story, it is evident that he was using *Chorea* as one of the two meanings of *Cor* (circle, dance) familiar to the Welsh, as Stonehenge (*Historia*, XI, iv) was its established name among the English. Whatever the folkloristic origin of the name *Chorea Gigantum*, Geoffrey obviously did not invent a name so irrelevant to his essential narrative; obviously also he did not derive it from Anglo-Saxon tradition. He was, presumably, simply translating a Welsh name for Stonehenge into Latin.

Geoffrey's account of Stonehenge as a funerary monument is connected with the partisan story, first told by the Welsh monk Nennius (*Historia Britonum*, ch. 45), of the treacherous massacre of hundreds of noble British chieftains by Hengist and his Saxons. The fact that Nennius says nothing of Stonehenge in this connection is offset by the fact that he also says nothing of it in the *Mirabilia*²⁸ commonly attributed to him, in which a reference to it as one of the Wonders of Britain would have seemed to be inevitable. His silence, like that of other writers in Britain before the twelfth century, is one of the most convincing proofs of the danger of the argument *ex silentio*, for indubitably through all recorded British history, Celtic, Roman, Saxon, early Norman, Stonehenge was there for men to marvel at. Yet with the exception of some supposed allusions to it in early Welsh literature,²⁹ and Henry of Huntingdon's actual but brief acknowledgement of its greatness, Geoffrey's is our first clear account of this famous monument. That he linked it with the ancient British story of the massacre raises the question, therefore, whether this associ-

²⁷ *Revue des traditions populaires*, 1907, pp. 417-419; Reinach, *Cultes*, III, 411.

²⁸ *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, ed. Mommsen, Berlin, 1898, III, 214 ff. Possibly this remote provincial author did not know of Stonehenge at all but he did know of at least two sites in his own western part of Britain which he associated with Arthurian legend, i.e., the Carn Caval and the large mound supposed to mark the grave of Amr, Arthur's son. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 217.

²⁹ The allusions occur chiefly in the Welsh poem of the "Gododdin," once supposed to be the work of the sixth century poet Aneurin. Skene, *Four Books of Ancient Wales*, II, 359, terms the attempt to find the occasion of this poem in the traditional slaughter of the British chiefs at Stonehenge, one of the most curious pieces of perverted ingenuity in Welsh literature. The triads also have been supposed to contain allusions to Stonehenge but the material seems too uncertain for argument. Cf. Loth, *Mabinogion*, II, 321, n. 1.

ation was invented by him, a boldly individualistic touch, or whether he derived it from tradition. In the latter case it is self-evident that the tradition was not one that people of Anglo-Saxon descent could reasonably be supposed to have invented or perpetuated, since it made of Stonehenge a memorial to the terrible perfidy of the Saxon invaders. The tradition, if it existed, must have been of Celtic provenance.

The supposition that Geoffrey invented this story of Stonehenge is, perhaps, best met, not by reference to the evidences that are now known of his general reliance on traditional materials, nor by insistence on the improbability that a medieval writer would have been likely, entirely on his own responsibility, to foist so ancient a British legend as that of the massacre on so great and so well-known a monument as Stonehenge, as by arguments based on the story itself.

According to Geoffrey, when the massacre of the Britons had been triumphantly revenged by King Aurelius, he repaired to the place where the four hundred and sixty murdered warriors had been given burial. He wished to make the place memorable but no one could devise an adequate plan. He thereupon sent for Merlin who gave him this advice:

Si perpetuo opere sepulturam uirorum decorare uolueris mitte pro chorea gigantum que est in Killarao³⁰ monte hybernie. Est etenim ibi structura lapidum quam nemo huius etatis construeret nisi ingenium arte subnecteret. Grandes sunt lapides. . . . Qui si eo modo quo ibidem positi sunt circa plateam locabantur stabunt in eternum. . . . Gigantes olim asportauerunt eos ex ultimis finibus affrice & posuerunt in hybernia dum eam inhabitarent (VIII, x; Griscom, p. 410-11).

Now whatever may be true or false in these words, they do imply that this ancient stone structure, long after its erection, was adopted by an alien race for a funeral monument. The legend of Stonehenge as a sepulchral circle fits in with the actual use,

³⁰ Rhys, *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 192, believed Geoffrey's Killara (us) was in the parish of Killare, Co. Westmeath, where, according to Gerald of Wales, a famous stone was still known as the *umbilicus Hiberniae*. Gerald himself believed Stonehenge had been taken from Kildare near Naas (*Topog. Hib.*, II, xviii; *Works*, V, 100; III, iv). As Gerald evidently knew Geoffrey's story it would seem that his Kildare was either a misreading of Geoffrey's Killare, or a deliberate change to Kildare. Borlase, *Dolmens*, II, 439, noted that dolmens are practically lacking in the region of Kildare.

now known to be worldwide, of stone circles for sepulture.³¹ Stonehenge itself may not originally have been so used,³² but that does not affect the case. The medieval belief that it was a sepulchral circle was justified for any observer by the presence of hundreds of barrows in its neighborhood³³ and also for a Celt by current traditions concerning megalithic remains. These legends, inspired as they were by monuments found most commonly in the Celtic parts of Britain³⁴ and of the same type as those in Ireland and Brittany, must have been chiefly Celtic in origin. Ancient Irish literature shows plainly the tendency to regard prehistoric structures as memorials to the dead. References are constantly made to the setting up of menhirs or pillar stones in honor of the dead; a text such as the *Acallamh*,³⁵ for instance, reports the current belief in both the antiquity and purpose of such stones. An Irish tale in the twelfth century Book of Leinster³⁶ tells of the actual making of a burial circle when in the ancient days fifty hostages were buried alive around the grave of King Fiachra. Great stone tombs, which the modern archaeologist rec-

³¹ "The one statement which can be made positively about the object of stone circles is that many of them were erected in honor of the dead": Rice Holmes, *Ancient Britain*, p. 211 (cf. p. 208, n. 3, for a useful bibliographical note on the worldwide use of sepulchral stone circles). See also Lord Avebury, *Prehistoric Times*, 6th ed., 1902, p. 103; Hastings, *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, III, 191; J. A. Macculloch, *Religion of the Ancient Celts*, Edinburgh, 1911, p. 281; J. E. Lloyd, *History of Wales*, 1911, I, 23, etc.

³² Stone, *Stones of Stonehenge*, pp. 116 ff.

³³ "Within a circular area of twenty miles about Stonehenge—there are 15.3 barrows to a square mile," Stone, *ibid.*, p. 35. To so cautious a scholar as Dr. Rice Holmes, *Ancient Britain*, p. 217, the monument and the vast necropolis of barrows seemed "indissolubly connected." In some cases actual excavation may have informed medieval people, as it has modern, of the sepulchral use of stone circles. Hidden treasure, in old as in modern times, was commonly supposed to be hidden under prehistoric structures of all sorts. For modern instances see Johnson, *Folk Memory*, Oxford, 1908, p. 163 ff.; also Sébillot, *Le Folk-Lore de France*, I, 331, 333; II, 44; IV, 19 ff. 44, 107. In the *Colloquy of the Ancients* (O'Grady, II, 126) the story is told of a tumulus from which St. Patrick's companions took a spearshaft's length of rings and bracelets. The excavation of tumuli and barrows seems always to have been more general, however, than digging about megalithic stones. Superstitious awe for the stones has for the most part protected them into recent times. Cf. Sébillot, IV, 51 ff.

³⁴ For the geographical distribution of stone circles in Britain see B. Windle, *Remains of the Prehistoric Age in England*, London, 1904, pp. 197 ff. For the most recent and comprehensive study of stone circles in Britain and elsewhere see H. A. Allcroft, *The Circle and the Cross*, London, 1927, vol. 1. Cf. p. 81 ff.

³⁵ See above, n. 12.

³⁶ O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, II, 543 (LL. 190:3) and p. 377 (Book of Ballymote) for *The Death of Crimthann . . . and Fiachra*.

ognizes as dolmens, are not infrequently mentioned in old Irish.³⁷ In short, even in the fragmentary materials that are left us for the study of ancient Celtic beliefs about megaliths, there is ample explanation for the belief of a Breton of Geoffrey's day that the great stone circle on Salisbury Plain belonged in its origin to remote antiquity and that it had once been used for sepulchral purposes. We know nothing of what an Anglo-Saxon would have thought of it except perhaps as he would have called it "enta geweorc" or Giants' Work,³⁸ for Anglo-Saxon literature, in notable contrast to that in Irish, is almost silent on the subject of megalithic remains. A Scandinavian, to judge from medieval Scandinavian references, would have thought it a *Domring* or *Thingstead*³⁹ and associated it with political and civil rather than funerary purposes. But to a twelfth century Celt megalithic structures were commonly memorials or tombs of the past, even as they are still to a Celtic peasant of today.

Geoffrey's assertion that the stones were objects of special veneration, *Mystici Lapidés*, likewise finds abundant parallels in Celtic tradition. He tells us that the giants who brought the stones from Africa to Ireland had this custom:

Erat autem causa ut balnea infra ipsos conficerent cum infirmitate grauarentur. Lauabant namque lapides & infra balnea diffundebant unde egroti curabantur. Miscebant etiam cum herbarum confectionibus unde uulnerati sanabantur. Non est ibi lapis qui medicamento careat (VIII, ix, Griscorn, p. 411).

This story is already, as we can see, partly rationalized. Healing herbs provide their curative properties in addition to those of the stones. But the stones themselves are still considered heal-

³⁷ As in the story alluded to in n. 13.

³⁸ The dragon's cave in *Beowulf* is thus styled. This and the Danish *jaettestue*, giant-chamber, have long since been recognized as earth-covered megalithic funeral mounds. Cf. W. W. Lawrence, *Beowulf and Epic Tradition*, Cambridge, Mass., 1928, p. 211 ff.; *PMLA*, XXXIII (1918), 569-583, 210. *Archaeologia*, XLII, 202; O. G. Crawford, *The Long Barrows of the Cotswolds*, Gloucester, 1925, p. 27.

³⁹ Allcroft, *Circle and Cross*, I, 122 ff., 131: "As early as the ninth century the Danes had no less than three centres of royalty . . . at each of which was a stone circle." He cites Olaus Magnus (d. 1558) on the old custom of electing kings of Sweden in a circle of twelve stones; the last one so elected was King Erec in 1396. For further discussion and evidence see F. Wildte, "Scandinavian Thingsteads," *Antiquity*, II (1928), 328-336. The use of stone circles for moots or assemblies is alluded to by Homer, *Iliad*, XVIII, 497; cf. Allcroft, pp. 81-92.

ing and wondrous. The story reveals precisely that historic *Veneratio Lapidum* which has in truth been found at all times and in all parts of the globe, but with special persistence in Celtic regions. Its general history can be traced all through the Middle Ages. Edict after edict of Church councils, among them that of Nantes in 658, calls for destruction of the Stones of Worship and prohibits the strange practices associated with them.⁴⁰ St. Sampson in Cornwall,⁴¹ St. Patrick in Ireland,⁴² and many another Celtic saint were busy, like missionaries all over Europe, with the overthrow of the "abominable" stones. How little Church or State succeeded in really eradicating this ancient worship of stones appears, however, in the superstitious veneration still accorded to them, especially to megalithic stones. Peasants fear them, they make offerings to them, they dance or they crawl on hands and knees about them or beneath them, they rub their bodies on them, they wash themselves in the healing water collected from hollows in the stones; their own spittle, rubbed from the stones is used for cures. These are practices recently surviving in Ireland, Brittany, Scotland, and Wales.⁴³ Miss Hull's chapter on

⁴⁰ A. Bertrand, *La Religion des Gaulois*: Paris, 1897, pp. 400 ff. lists many of the decrees, from the decree of Arles, 452, down to the end of the seventeenth century. See also E. Cartailhac: *La France Préhistorique*, 1899, pp. 316 ff. Texts given *in extenso* by Danjou de la Garenne, *Statistique des monuments celtiques de l'arrondissement de Fougères*, App. Mém. de la Soc. Arch. d'Ille-et-Vilaine, II, 71-83. Both Charlemagne and Canute specifically forbade the barbaric cults connected with the worship of stones. Cf. D'Arbois de Jubainville, "*Le Culte des Menhir dans le Monde Celtique*," *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, 1906, pp. 146 ff.; Mortillet, see below, note 44. Sébillot, *Le Paganisme Contemporain*, p. 132 ff. J. F. Ffrench, *Prehistoric Faith and Worship*, L., 1912, p. 22, cites some particularly interesting thirteenth century prohibitions (Norse and English) of stone worship and notes that even as late as 1656 the Presbytery of Dingwall (Ross) forbade the adoring of stones and wells.

⁴¹ See above, n. 25.

⁴² In the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick* the story is told of his overthrow of the great stone idol known as Cromm Cruaich which was surrounded by twelve lesser stone idols. See below, n. 54. All scholars are agreed that this story refers to an ancient twelve-stone circle surrounding a great central stone.

⁴³ In addition to the references given in the text see S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Brittany*, 1909, p. 21 (oil on menhir); G. F. Black, *Examples of Printed Folklore concerning Orkney and Shetland*, 1903 (people healed by water in which they had washed stone of St. Conval); G. Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, Glasgow, 1911, pp. 198-209; *Folklore*, XIII, 235; XVI (1905), 339 (Arthur's stone, Gower, crawled round by girls); 339, curative spittle rubbed from cromlech near Cardiff; XVII, 448 (Irish cromlechs cure barrenness); XXII (1911), 51 (offerings made as late as 1840 on so-called Druid's Altar). Sébillot's *Le Folk-Lore de France* has many important references on the curative power of megalithic stones. See Index, *Médecine*, les mégalithes; *Sterilité*. Macalister, *Arch. of Ireland*, p. 101.

The Worship of Stones in her book on *The Folklore of the British Isles*, Sébillot's *Le Paganisme Contemporain*, Reinach's "Les Monuments de Pierre Brute dans le Langage et les Croyances Populaires" (*Rev. Archeol.* XXX (1893), 195 ff., 329 ff.) give instance after instance of this surviving cult of stones. As Reinach remarks:

On en arrive donc à la conclusion que le folklore des mégalithes . . . est essentiellement païen.

Since these beliefs and customs of essentially pagan origin⁴⁴ are thus known to have been associated with megalithic monuments from the fifth century down to the present day, it would indeed be incredible if none had attached themselves to the greatest megalithic monument in Britain. Geoffrey's report of the *Mystici Lapidés* with their curative powers and the extreme veneration in which the stones were held by the Irish who were, as his story goes on to tell, quite willing to fight and die for them, accords too accurately with all that is known of the ancient and the modern feeling for such stones and of the customs still connected with them in Celtic lands, to have been his own invention or to have arisen, as we may believe from these and other considerations, from other than Celtic sources.

The most incredible elements in Geoffrey's story relate to the importation of the stones. If we leave aside the account of Merlin's magical *machinationes*, two facts, however, are distinguishable in the apparently impossible tale. Some, though not all, of the stones of Stonehenge were in actual fact imported from a region remote from Salisbury Plain; second, the circle of Stonehenge, though not in itself identical with one once in Africa and then in Ireland, is nevertheless akin to stone circles immemorially existent both in Africa and Ireland.

The first fact, despite long continued controversy, seems to have been finally established by modern geological science,⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Efforts to Christianize ancient Stones of Worship have resulted in little more than the placing of crosses upon them. Cf. A. de Mortillet, "Les Monuments mégalithiques christianisés," *Rev. de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie*, VII (1897) 321 ff.; O'Laverty, "Notes on Pagan Monuments in the Immediate Vicinity of Ancient Churches," *Jour. Roy. Hist. Arch. Soc.*, XV, 103.

⁴⁵ H. H. Thomas, "The Source of the Stones of Stonehenge," *Antiquaries Journal*, III (1923), 239-258. In this important article by a member of the British Geological Survey, it is established that the blue stones in no single case weighed more than two and a half tons, that geologically the stones belong to the Prescelly

which has proved “beyond all reasonable doubt”⁴⁶ that the blue or foreign stones of Stonehenge were taken to Wiltshire from the eastern end of the Prescelly Mountains in Pembrokeshire, a region still containing rich megalithic remains.⁴⁷ How or when or why that “tremendous feat of prehistoric transport,” over a distance of about one hundred and seventy miles, was accomplished, it is not our business to inquire. But it is essential to insist that Geoffrey’s story that the stones were imported is, with reference to the blue stones, essentially true. Whether medieval observers noted the difference in the nature of the blue stones from those commonly found on Salisbury Plain and so inferred that they were brought from a distance, or whether some dim tradition persisted as to that feat which must, like the building of the Pyramids, have involved great numbers of people disciplined somehow to unified effort, it is futile to attempt to decide. It is enough to admit that Geoffrey’s story, despite its exaggeration of the distance that the stones were brought, preserves something true, something he did not invent.

The exaggeration we have just noted and likewise the factual element which it obscures are equally evident in Geoffrey’s assertion that the circle came originally from Africa to Ireland and then to England. The worldwide dissemination of stone circles is, of course, today a well known fact, but so far as has yet been noted Sir Christopher Wrenn⁴⁸ seems to have been the first

region from which they must have been brought by land transport, that they were dressed at some period, presumably long after their arrival, in order to conform to those other dressed stones of Stonehenge which represent the latest and most advanced stage of megalithic work.

⁴⁶ Thomas’s results are accepted by R. E. Wheeler, *Prehistoric and Roman Wales*, Oxford, 1925, p. 100; Stone, *Stonehenge*, p. 64; Kendrick, *The Druids*, p. 152; the new *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1929, XXI, 439.

⁴⁷ Bushell, “Amongst the Prescelly Circles,” *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, Ser. 6, vol. XI, 1911, 287 ff. speaks of the Prescelly area as a “prehistoric Westminster”; Thomas, p. 257, as an “area containing one of the richest collections of megalithic remains in Britain.” He observes that only the special veneration in which stones of this area were held can account for their laborious removal to Stonehenge, for the stones themselves are in no way better than those available on Salisbury Plain.

⁴⁸ Quoted by Stukeley, *Stonehenge*, 1740, p. 49: “Sir Christopher Wrenn said there were many such structures as Stonehenge in Africa, being temples to Saturn.” Some five or six thousand dolmens in North Africa, many of them surrounded by circles, were examined by General Faidherbe, *Comptes rendus du Congrès Préhistorique*, 1872; Borlase, *Dolmens*, III, 713-19. A valuable recent study of some seventy stone circles in West Africa was made by H. Parker, “Some Circles in Gambia,” *Proc. Anthropol. Institute of Great Britain*, LIII (1923), 173 ff. These circles were close to villages and were regarded with awe by the natives. Cf. also

Englishman to justify Geoffrey's story to the extent of stating that stone circles actually did exist in Africa. It has remained for later observers to report similarities between architectural trilithons seen in Africa and those at Stonehenge, and to record the numberless stone circles still extant there,⁴⁹ just as it has remained for recent philologists to observe that certain non-Aryan idioms in Welsh speech are possibly allied to those in Egyptian and Berber.⁵⁰ Whatever the explanation of these apparently inexplicable relationships, it is important to note that Geoffrey's implication, however he came to make it, that stone circles existed in Africa, is now known to be fact, not fancy. His story of the giants and the aerial travels of the stones should not too much obscure that fragment of truth.

The statement that the Giants' Dance was once erected in Ireland likewise implies the existence of stone circles in Ireland. Again as a matter of fact not fancy, we must note that Ireland is a place extraordinarily rich in megalithic remains of all sorts; it has over eight hundred dolmens and many of these are still surrounded by stone circles.⁵¹ These rich megalithic remains, so like those found in the Celtic parts of Britain itself, although not originally erected in many cases by Celtic peoples,⁵² were none the less certainly known to the successive Celtic settlers. Among the medieval Celts, as we have already noted, cults and legends in connection with the ancient stone circles were current. The prehistoric Irish circles, the ancient Irish legends, alike confirm Geoffrey's story in so far as it asserts there was once a great stone

J. W. Fewkes, "Great Stone Monuments in History and Geography," *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections*, LXI (1913), No. 6, p. 14 ff.: "In Berrary, Africa, Dr. Forbes Watson counted 2129 megalithic monuments"; A. Lissauer, "The Habyles of N. Africa," *Smithsonian Report*, 1911, p. 523 ff.

⁴⁹ H. Barth, *Travels in North Africa, 1849-56*, London, 1857, I, 74. At Oran near Djelfa, in Zenzer, there is a circle of standing stones and a trilithon ten feet high. Cf. Livingston, *Missionary Travels in Africa*, pp. 219, 304; Lord Avebury, *Prehistoric Times*, pp. 100, 105.

⁵⁰ J. M. Jones, app. B in Rhys, *The Welsh People*, London, 1909, pp. 630 ff.; J. E. Lloyd, *History of Wales*, 1911, I, 15 ff.

⁵¹ See A. A. Lewis, "Some Stone Circles in Ireland," *Jour. Anthropol. Inst. of Great Britain*, XXXIX (1909) 517 ff.; Macalister, *Archaeology of Ireland*, Index; Borlase, *Dolmens*, Index.

⁵² On the pre-Celtic origin of megalithic remains in France and Britain, see Bertrand, *Archéol. Celt. et Gauloise*, Paris, 1889, p. 125; J. A. Maccullach, *Religion of the Ancient Celts*, 1911, p. 281; Hastings, *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, III, 391; A. Macbain, "Druid Circles," *Gaelic Soc. of Inverness, Transactions*, 1885, XI, 23-50.

circle in Ireland about which a legend of the giants was told. The further details of his story which connect Ireland and Stonehenge, however mistaken in facts, are not incapable of explanation.

The assertion that Stonehenge, so grandly made that no later time could build its equal, came to England from Ireland, implies a pride in things Irish. Such pride would be naturally expressed by men of Irish birth, those Irish wanderers who at early periods are said to have dwelt as much in Britain as in Ireland, to have gone as far south as the English Channel, and to have settled in numerous places in the north. It is of particular interest in studying the possible transmission and evolution of such a legend as this about Stonehenge, to find that the Dessi, an Irish tribe that is supposed to have left Leinster in the third century, settled in Pembrokeshire, the original home of the Stonehenge "foreign stones."⁵³ There they found the same sort of megalithic remains as those with which they had been familiar in Ireland. If they appropriated any of these to their own uses, if, for instance, they appropriated a Pembrokeshire stone circle to such a cult as that of Cromm Cruaich,⁵⁴ a cult unquestionably associated with some Irish twelve stone circle,⁵⁵ it is easy to see how presently the legend might arise that not only the cult, but the very stones had

⁵³ The Irish story, "The Expulsion of the Dessi," (Ed. K. Meyer, *Y Cymmrodor*, XIV (1901), 112 ff.) was composed sometime during the eighth century. The Dessi were supposed to have left Leinster in the third century. See C. H. Slover, "Early Literary Channels between Britain and Ireland," *Univ. of Texas Studies in English*, No. 6, 1926, p. 15, a work which discusses the available evidence concerning the early Irish in Britain. Cf. C. O'Rahilly, *Ireland and Wales*, L., 1924, p. 39 ff. Thomas's remarks, *Antiquaries Jour.*, III, 258, are of special interest. He notes that as early as 1833 Conybeare believed Geoffrey's legend concerning the importation of the stones had an element of truth: "We now realize that a derivation from the west is the only tenable view to take with regard to the foreign stones of Stonehenge and it certainly seems probable that little discrimination would be exercised in early times in any legendary story between the extreme west of Wales and the south of Ireland. Again there is the possibility of the same race occupying both regions, and thus the name Ireland might have been applied later to indicate a racial character rather than a definite locality." Mr. Thomas was ignorant of the actual settlement of the Dessi in Pembrokeshire.

⁵⁴ The worship of Cromm is described in the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick* (ed. Rolls Series, I, 93); also in the Rennes *Dinnshenchas* (cf. Meyer, *Voyage of Bran*, II, 305). The *Tripartite Life* is dated by K. Mulchrone between 895-901 (*Zts. f. celt. Phil.*, XVI (1928)). The most important study of the cult of Cromm Cruaich, its localization, its survivals, is that by J. P. Dalton, *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, XXXVI (1922), 22-67. See also R. A. Macalister, *Ireland in pre-Christian Times*, Dublin, 1921, p. 195; L. Hibbard Loomis, *Mod. Phil.*, XXV (1928), 345 ff.

⁵⁵ The two ancient accounts of Cromm's worship describe a central idol surrounded by twelve stones. It is admitted by all writers on the subject that

been brought from Ireland. It is, however, not essential to suppose this actual association of Irish cults with British stone circles; mere braggadocio on the part of Irish wanderers anywhere in Britain, might easily have led them to assert that the British circles, merely because of their resemblance to those in Ireland, had been brought from there. Stonehenge, as one of the greatest of British stone circles, would be the first for Irish pride to claim.

This supposition that the Stonehenge legend at some time passed through Irish hands before it came to Geoffrey, is strengthened by a detail still preserved in his narrative. In the Latin manuscripts of the *Historia* the name of the Irish king who fought to keep the great stones in Ireland, was Gillomanus or Gillam(a)urus. Now Irish annals, of course, tell of neither king nor fight, since the stones were never in Ireland. But the name itself, which in one manuscript, appears as *Gilla*, is perhaps significant. *Gilla*, some form of which is the only recurrent element in the various spellings of the name,⁵⁶ means in Irish servant or slave. The story certainly makes of Gillomanus the servant of the stones. The name is too Latinized and corrupted to offer safe ground for argument except for its apparent preservation of a significant Irish word and its consequent suggestion of an original Irish storyteller. It should be noted, however, that it was to this same Gillomanus, according to Geoffrey (VIII, xiii) that Pascentius, the son of Vortigern, fled when seeking help against Aurelius Ambrosius and Uther. Now we have evidence that the Irish in Ireland knew something of Vortigern at least, for two ancient stones marked respectively with the name Vortigurn and Vorritigurn have been found at Knockaboy, County Waterford, and at Ballyhank, six miles from Cork.⁵⁷ Slover notes

the story must concern one of the smaller stone circles of this familiar type. See Allcroft, *Circle and Cross*, p. 257; Macalister, *op. cit.*, p. 195, etc.

⁵⁶ I am indebted to the Rev. Acton Griscom for the following name observations. In the group of Latin MSS studied by him for his edition of Geoffrey's *Historia* the name Gilloman(n)ius occurs twelve times; *Gilla* once; and thirteen times in one of these spellings, Gillomaurus, Gillamurius, Gillamurus, Gillmaurus, Gilmaris. The Welsh equivalent is uniformly Gilamwri.

It is of interest to note that the early Irish word *gilla* antedates the Norse period in Ireland and is found in combination with other words as early as the eighth century. Cf. C. Marstrander, "Altirische Personennamen mit *Gilla*," *Zts. f. celt. Phil.*, XIII (1921), 1 ff. In combination with the Irish word *mor* the name might have meant *Great Servant*.

⁵⁷ Slover, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Macalister, *Studies in Irish Epigraphy*, London, 1897-1907, III, 210, 80.

that the name of Vortigern is not duplicated elsewhere and its presence on these ancient Irish stones suggests that even in Ireland something was known of the very man in whose presence, according to Geoffrey (VI, xv), those British heroes were slain for whom, in legend at least, Stonehenge became their funeral monument. The Vortigern stones, by confirming the antiquity and actuality of the name, heighten the probability that Nennius and Geoffrey, in telling their stories of the king who bore it, were drawing on traditional material. Similarly it seems probable that Geoffrey was again following tradition in telling the closely related story of a king whose name, in its one recurrent element, is the ancient Irish *gilla*.

From this examination of Geoffrey's legend of Stonehenge it appears that the story was far too deeply rooted in tradition to have sprung from the imagination of one man. The traditions behind the story, like the partisan spirit in which it was told, seem to have been Celtic in origin. They show us once again how little was Geoffrey "the father of Arthurian romance" in general or of this legend in particular. The story itself, though so negligible as history, offers us none the less invaluable witness of the actual presence in twelfth century records of megalithic Celtic folklore, and suggests the wisdom of further study of both Irish and Arthurian sources for a still unwritten but fertile chapter in medieval antiquarianism.⁵⁸ There can be no doubt that other prehistoric monuments, less famous to be sure than Stonehenge but not archaeologically less recognizable as to type, figure in such texts, even as the ancient stones still stand today in the lands that gave birth to Irish and Arthurian legend.

⁵⁸ See my article in *Mod. Lang. Rev.*, XXVI (1931), 408-26.

CHAUCER AND THE BRETON LAYS OF THE AUCHINLECK MANUSCRIPT*

IN that famous and venerable Auchinleck MS, beloved of Sir Walter Scott and many another medievalist, there are three Breton lays in English: *Sir Degaré*, f. 78 ff., *Le Freine*, f. 261 ff., a moderately free translation of Marie de France's lay of that name, and *Sir Orfeo*, f. 300 ff. In former times, when the manuscript contained the fourteen items which the original numbering shows have now been lost from it, there may have been additional lays, but the three still left offer in themselves, as everyone will probably admit, a fair illustration of the type. With the vexed questions of the origins of these particular lays or of the type in general, we are not, in this inquiry, at all concerned. We seek rather to know a more simple, but not an unimportant thing. Did Chaucer himself ever make use of these three stories which, so far as we know, he could have read together only in this one manuscript? If the question be answered affirmatively, then we can add a few more items to the still incredibly short list of Chaucer's known English sources; we can go far towards establishing his use of this, the most important of all the medieval English manuscripts that antedate the poet.

For present purposes the facts about the manuscript may be briefly stated.¹ Nothing is known of its history before 1744 when it was given by the father of James Boswell to the Faculty of Advocates of the University of Edinburgh. As Adv. MS. 19. 2. 1. no. 155, it is housed today in that city in the National Library

* From *Studies in Philology*, XXXVIII (1941), 14-33.
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¹ For a fuller statement see my article on "Chaucer and the Auchinleck MS: *Thopas* and *Guy of Warwick*." For opinions on the date of the MS, see J. M. Booker, *A Middle English Bibliography* (Heidelberg, 1912), p. 54. The best description of the whole MS is that of Eugen Kölbing, *Englische Studien*, VII (1884), pp. 177-201.

of Scotland. This large volume, containing almost every type of Middle English verse, must have been compiled between 1327, the date of the latest historical allusion in the book, and about 1340, a date indicated by paleographical evidence. Scholars are agreed that the book originated in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. It was written by five scribes, but the three lays were alike set down by one copyist, known as the *a*-scribe, who wrote, in all, thirty-five² of the extant forty-four items in the manuscript. In 1933 the London origin of this *a*-scribe was for the first time established by Brunner in his edition of the *Seven Sages of Rome*; in 1935 the London origin of the *y*-scribe was established by Zettl in his edition of the *Short Metrical English Chronicle*.³ Since more than three-fourths of the manuscript was thus written by London scribes, we may, without waiting for further studies of other scribes, consider that, essentially, it was produced in London. And if it were so produced, then there is reasonable likelihood that the book remained in that city until some fifty years later, when Chaucer might have had access to it. As the few surviving miniatures show, it could never have been considered a pearl of price among manuscripts, too elaborate, too costly, for a London citizen of comfortable means to have used or even to have owned.

With this evidence in mind to the effect that, so far as time, place, and cost were concerned, Chaucer might have had access to this ancient volume with its three still extant lays, we turn for a moment to other manuscripts to discover what they have to suggest concerning the actual status of Breton lays in the fourteenth century. Whatever the early vogue of the type, it is not without significance that all five of the extant French manuscripts of Marie de France's lays date from before 1350; of the two manuscripts copied in England, one is thought to have been written in the second half of the thirteenth century, the other about 1300.⁴ The three English lays of the Auchinleck MS were certainly, and Chestre's *Launfal* was probably, composed and copied before 1350.⁵ Such vogue as the lays enjoyed in fourteenth

² Cf. Kölbing, *ibid.*; Muriel B. Carr, *Univ. of Wisc., Studies in Lang. and Lit.*, II (1918), 153.

³ Karl Brunner, *EETS*, 191 (1933), xxv ff.; Ewald Zettl, *EETS*, 196 (1935), cxviii.

⁴ For the five French manuscripts see Karl Warnke, *Die Lais der Marie de France* (Halle, 1925), pp. lx ff. The two manuscripts copied in England are H, Harl. 978, and C, Cott. Vesp. B. XIV.

⁵ Cf. John Edwin Wells, *Manual of Writings in Middle English* (New Haven,

century England seems, therefore, to have belonged distinctly to the first half of the period; in the second half we have dating from it only one manuscript, Egerton 2862, containing fragments of *Degaré*, to represent the lays in either French or English. After Chaucer made his own distinguished use of the type in the *Franklin's Tale*, the case was different; something in the nature of a revival is indicated by the eight still extant copies of so-called "lays of Bretayne" in fifteenth century English manuscripts.⁶ But it is important to remember that three of these lays, *Emaré*, *Earl of Toulous*, and *Sir Gowther*, which exist only in manuscripts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were not composed until about 1400 or afterwards.⁷ They have, in consequence, no significance for any discussion of the lays known to Chaucer or for any theorizing about supposed contemporary interest in the type.

The surviving examples show then that six manuscripts containing lays, five in French and one in English, date from before 1350, and that eight English copies of lays date from after 1400. The fact that only one copy of one lay survives in a manuscript of 1350-1400, suggests, even though it does not prove, that in these years the lays were not in vogue, that they were not being re-copied by scribes, and were not, presumably, being discussed by contemporary literati.⁸ If the lays had been currently popular, we should, indeed, be at a loss to explain why Chaucer so

1916), pp. 126-28; 131-35. As I have pointed out in *Sources and Analogues of the "Canterbury Tales,"* ed. Bryan and Dempster, Chaucer used Chestre's *Launfal* for his burlesque, *Sir Thopas*. Max Kaluza, *Libeaus Desconus*, p. clxvi, and R. Zimmerman, *Sir Landeval* (Königsberg, 1900), p. 27 alike date Chestre's lay before 1325.

⁶ There are two fifteenth century copies of *Orfeo*, Ashmole 61, and Harl. 3810, and two of *Sir Gowther*, Edin., Adv. Libr., 19. 3. 1, and Royal 17 B XLIII. Unique copies of *Launfal* and *Emaré* survive in Cott. Calig. A II. *Degaré* and the *Earl of Toulous* are alike found in Cbg., Univ. Libr., Ff. II, 38.

⁷ Cf. Wells, *Manual*, p. 129 (*Emaré*) p. 135 (*Sir Gowther*); p. 137 (*Earl of Toulous*). It is worth noting that it is only in the English versions that these stories are termed Breton lays. Elsewhere they are called *dits*, *miracles*, *contes*, or chronicles or romances. Cf. Laura A. Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in England* (N. Y., 1924), pp. 26-28, 35-37, 49-51.

⁸ The same conclusion was reached by Lucien Foulet, *Zts. rom. Phil.*, XXX (1906), 698-711, though chiefly through negative considerations, i.e., the lack of reference in French literature in the second half of the fourteenth century to Breton lays, the regular meaning in this period of *lai* as a song or amorous complaint, the complete preoccupation of such contemporary French writers as Machaut, Froissart, and Deschamps, with materials wholly different from those of twelfth century romance. In this case, it must be urged, the only positive evidence is that of the manuscripts, and they agree with Foulet's contention.

deliberately emphasized the ancient air of his own Breton lay, or the noble but old fashioned tastes of the white-bearded Franklin. Chaucer's archaistic emphasis, however, agrees with the manuscripts in suggesting that between 1350 and 1400 the Breton lay was somewhat out of date and fashion. It would seem, therefore, more probable than otherwise that Chaucer got his ideas about the type, not from contemporary discussions, but from reading in *olde bokes*. It would seem also more, rather than less probable, in view of his limited and infrequent use of Celtic material of any kind, that he did not devote himself to any very prolonged or widespread reading in Breton lays, or any other variety of Celtic romance.

Although it is manifestly impossible to prove that Chaucer never read the French lays, it must be admitted that no convincing proof that he did read them has ever been set forth. As Professor Robinson has remarked: "It is doubtful whether he had direct knowledge of the writings of Marie, though the *Franklin's Tale* is held by some scholars to show the influence of her lay of *Equitan*. Chaucer could have got full knowledge of the type from the English lays."⁹ It is with this possibility that we are primarily concerned. For it is, I believe, possible to show that the poet's ideas about Breton lays in general, as set forth in the *Franklin's Prologue*, and also certain elements, previously unnoted, in the *Franklin's Tale* and elsewhere, can be better explained by his use of the lays in the Auchinleck MS, a manuscript from which he seems also to have borrowed other material, than by any French collection of the lays known to us. The present inquiry presents the surely not unreasonable hypothesis that Chaucer made use of what was, so far as we know anything about it at all, one of the earliest and largest collections of Middle English verse. That it was not important to him in the sense that it is to us, that it served rather as the humorous "chief begetter" of *Sir Thopas*, I have elsewhere attempted to show.¹⁰ A single manuscript which seems to account for as much as does this one volume, is worthy the most serious attention. The very fact that its texts relate to what were palpably minor and rather sporadic interests in Chaucer's literary life, strengthens rather than weakens the argument. For we cannot imagine that a man chiefly nurtured,

⁹ F. N. Robinson, *Chaucer's Complete Works* (Boston, 1933), p. 827. All Chaucerian quotations are from this edition.

¹⁰ See the articles referred to in notes 1 and 5.

as our author was, on French, Italian, and Latin writings, would have cared to own many, or to read often, in those English *bokes* that by comparison, were still in Chaucer's own day so much more popular in character and expression. That one of them can be found in which the actual phraseology of certain texts, some of them unique, and certain distinctive concepts and situations are strikingly, even if sometimes ironically, paralleled by Chaucer in a limited section of his own most mature work, can hardly be a matter of chance.

THE BRETON-LAY PROLOGUE

We begin with what Chaucer has to say about Breton lays in general. He did not often pause for literary definition; with the exception of his comments on *tragedie* and *exametron* in the *Monk's Prologue*, the five lines he devotes to the lays in the *Franklin's Prologue* stand alone. Was this passage original? Was it a complex of borrowings from different sources, or was it drawn from some one specific source? We must quote again the well-known lines:

Thise olde gentil Britouns in hir dayes 709
Of diverse aventures maden layes,
Rymeyed in hir firste Briton tonge;
Whiche layes with hir instrumentz they songe,
Or elles reddem hem for hir plesaunce.

For the sake of ready reference we may number the nine distinct ideas which Chaucer here set forth: No. 1, the lays were made by *Britouns*; No. 2, the *Britouns* were *gentil*; No. 3, they lived in old days; No. 4, they composed in their own language; No. 5, the lays were in rime; No. 6, the lays were sung; No. 7, they were accompanied by musical instruments; No. 8, they were written down; No. 9, they were on divers subjects. These apparently well-informed lines, in addition to the Franklin's statements that he would himself tell a Breton lay, have been the basis for the belief that Chaucer knew a good deal about Breton lays, and that it was this knowledge which in part enabled him to produce so delightful a tale as that of the noble Dorigen. No one questions the delightfulness of the tale, but in the last thirty years the whole trend of criticism has been to confirm the observation made by Hart in 1909 that, in comparison with all known lays,

“the differences [in the *Franklin's Tale*] are more striking than the likenesses.” Not only has no Breton lay source ever been found for this tale, but no Celtic analogue is known for any considerable part of it. The identification in it by Rajna and Tatlock of the elements drawn from Boccaccio's *Filocolo*, has rendered even the possibility of such a source highly improbable.¹¹ The *Franklin's Prologue* remains, therefore, the only safe, entirely unquestioned evidence for what Chaucer knew, or thought he knew, about Breton lays.

This prologue has usually been compared with the prologues and other passages in Old French lays, in particular, with the prologues to *Equitan* and to *Tyolet*. Schofield quoted *Equitan* to show that the *Franklin's Prologue* is “simply imitated, if not translated from the French, every lay having a prologue of this kind.” This incautious statement was rightly criticized by Rajna, but he, too, agreed that *Equitan* “fosse presente al pensiero del Chaucer,” and quoted from it the following lines:

Mult unt esté noble barun
Cil de Bretaigne, li Bretun.
Jadis suleient par pruësce,
Par curteisie e par noblesce
Des aventures que oeient,
Ki a plusurs genz aveneient,
Faire les lais pur remembrance
Qu'um nes meist en ubliance.¹²

It is curious that neither Schofield nor Rajna observed that *Equitan* agrees with Chaucer in four, or at most five, items: that the lays were made by Bretons, who were old and noble (Nos. 1, 2, 3); that the lays were about diverse *aventures* (No. 9). By itself *faire les lais* might mean to compose rimed lays (No. 5), but in conjunction with *pur remembrance*, *faire* must mean, as else-

¹¹ Walter Morris Hart, “The Franklin's Tale,” *Haverford Essays* (Haverford, 1909), stressed the differences in literary technique between Chaucer's lay and the others known to us. Pio Rajna, *Romania*, XXXII (1903), pp. 204-44, and J. S. P. Tatlock, “Scene of the *Franklin's Tale* Revisited,” *Chaucer Soc. Ser. LI* (1914), pp. 55-77, established the Boccaccian elements. Both the *Franklin's Tale* and *Filocolo* have the same primary characters, the loving husband and wife, the unwelcome suitor and the magician who aids him, the garden setting, the lady's imposition of an apparently impossible task, the grief-tricken interview of husband and wife, his insistence that she keep her promise, the final *dubbio*, to say nothing of other agreements.

¹² Rajna, loc. cit., 231; cf. Wm. H. Schofield, *PMLA*, XVI (1906), 427.

where in Old French, *to relate, to record*,¹³ i.e., in this instance, the equivalent of to write down. But nothing corresponds to the Chaucerian ideas numbered Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7. In short, half at least of Chaucer's specific ideas are left unaccounted for by this passage. The same thing is true of *Tyolet*, which, though it agrees in references to the Bretons, their nobility and antiquity, to the writing of the lays, nevertheless makes an essential contradiction to Chaucer's own statement that the *Britouns* rimed in their own language:

Li preude clerc qui donc estoient	27
Totes escrire les fesoient:	
Mises estoient en latin	
Et en escrit em parchemin	
Por ce qu'encor tel tens seroit	
Que l'en volontiers les orroit.	
Or sont dites et racontées.	
Bretons en firent lais plusors, ¹⁴	35
Si con dient nos ancessors.	

What is true of these lays is true, though in even less degree, of a number of others: individually they offer parallels to one or two of Chaucer's ideas, but never in Old French, with the exception of the *Lay dou Lecheor*, does any single passage correspond to half the list of Chaucer's ideas on the subject.¹⁵

Now it has, of course, long been known that there is in Middle English a passage, antecedent to Chaucer, which describes Breton lays. It alike introduces the lays of *Freine* and *Orfeo*: it was quoted by both Schofield and Rajna. But the latter said that comparison of it with the *Franklin's Prologue* "ha per effetto di mettere in maggior luce le convenienze peculiari del proemio coll' *Equitan*," a remark which, I think, it would be difficult to substantiate. Schofield merely spoke of the passage as interesting; Wells quoted it as an effective introduction to his own treatment of the lays in Middle English, but there has been almost no serious consideration of it in connection with the *Franklin's Prologue*.¹⁶ Years ago, but without any reference to

¹³ Wm. A. Nitze, *Perlesvaus* (Chicago, 1937), II, 178, n. 3.

¹⁴ *Romania*, VIII (1879), 42, *Tyolet*.

¹⁵ In its 124 verses *Lay dou Lecheor* (*Romania*, VIII, 65) does touch on all of Chaucer's ideas, directly or indirectly, except on that concerning the Breton language. But no one will suppose that Chaucer got his ideas of the type or of *gentil Britouns* from this source.

¹⁶ For Rajna's comment see *Romania* XXXII, 282; for Schofield's *Eng. Lit.* . . .

the Auchinleck MS and without any analysis of the text, Lucien Foulet¹⁷ did urge that Chaucer got most of his ideas about Breton lays from this English prologue, but the insistent tendency to seek for Chaucer's sources in the remote and foreign, in the more learned literature of his day, has led to a curious disregard of this very simple and natural explanation. Here, as we shall now see, is a passage which accounts for every one of his ideas about the lays. It was in his own language and in a manuscript far more accessible to him presumably than any known French manuscript, a manuscript of which, in entirely other instances, he seems likewise to have made recognizable use.

The *Prologue* and one later couplet in the unique copy of the *Lai le Freine* in the Auchinleck MS read as follows:

We redeþ oft & findeþ [ywri]te,
 & þis clerkes wele it wite,
 layes þat ben in harping
 ben yfounde of ferli þing. 5
 Sum beþe of wer & sum of wo,
 & sum of ioie & mirþe also,
 & sum of trecherie & of gile,
 of old auentours þat fel while;
 & sum of bourdes & ribaudy. 10
 & mani þer beþ of fairy.
 Of al þinge[s] þat men seþ,
 mest o loue for soþe þai beþ.
 In Breteyne bi hold time
 Þis layes were wrougt, so seiþ þis rime. 15
 When kinges miȝt our yhere
 of ani meruailes þat þer were,
 Þai token an harp in gle & game,
 & maked a lay & ȝaf it name.¹⁸

 þe Freyns of þe asche is a freyn 231
 After þe language of Bretayn.

to Chaucer (N. Y., 1906), p. 179. Skeat, Robinson, Manly, in their editions of the *Canterbury Tales*, do not mention the *Freine-Orfeo Prologue* in connection with that of the Franklin.

¹⁷ Foulet, *MLN*, XXI (1906), 47, n. 1; *Zts. f. rom Phil.*, XXX (1906), 707.

¹⁸ Auchinleck MS, f. 261 a: *Lai le Freine*, ed. Margaret Wattie in *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, X (1929), 1. The French text corresponding to vss. 231-32 says nothing of language. Cf. Karl Warnke, *Die Lais der Marie de France*, 3rd ed., p. 63, "Le Fraisne," vss. 229-30.

Surprising though it be, this same *Breton-Lay Prologue*, as we may now call it, once also prefaced the lay of *Orfeo* in the same manuscript. The leaf containing the end of *Sir Tristrem* and the beginning of *Sir Orfeo* is now torn out, but since the two other extant manuscripts of *Orfeo* contain the Prologue and all three manuscripts were derived from the same source, there is no reason to doubt that the Auchinleck *Orfeo* likewise had this Prologue.¹⁹ There is no substantial variation between the *Freine* and *Orfeo* Prologues except in these four lines of the latter text:

In Brytayn þis layes arne ywryte, 13
 Furst yfounde and forþe ygete,
 Of adventures þat fillen by dayes
 Whereof Brytouns made her layes.

This last couplet, peculiar to the *Orfeo* text, has special importance. For what, we may ask, could be much closer to Chaucer's own couplet?

These olde gentil *Britouns* in *hir dayes*
 Of diverse adventures maden layes.

Seven out of these twelve words are identical with those in the earlier prologue, and here, in *precisely the same context*, he uses *precisely the same rime*, a rime which by no possibility could he have derived from any French text.²⁰ This almost identical couplet is matched, moreover, by an almost complete correspondence of ideas. Without Chaucer's accomplished brevity, to be sure, the *Breton-lay Prologue* likewise states that the lays were written (No. 8); they were on the diverse subjects enumerated in vss. 5-12 (No. 9); they were of ancient times (No. 3); they were made by Bretons (No. 1); very *gentil Britouns*, indeed, for they were *kinges* (No. 2); the lays were accompanied by harps (No. 7, Chaucer's *instrumentz*), a statement which surely implies that the lays were sung (No. 7), since neither then nor now would we expect harp music to be accompanied by speech, not song; a later line in *Orfeo* (v. 600) even assures us:

Gode is þe lay, swete is þe note.

¹⁹ *Sir Orfeo*, ed. Oscar Zielke (Breslau, 1880), pp. 22, 25, 26. Cf. K. Sisam, *Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose* (Oxford, 1921), p. 208.

²⁰ The identity of this rime and its context was pointed out by Foulet, *Zts. rom. Phil.*, XXX, 707, n. 4; by Ezio Levi, *I lais bretoni* (Perugia, 1918), p. 89. Both rime and context recur in *Emaré*.

The word *lay*, repeatedly used in both versions, and identified in the *Freine* text as *his rime* (v. 14), plainly indicates the rimed compositions to which Chaucer alluded. There is in vs. 232 a specific reference to the language of the lays. The first line of the *Franklin's Tale*,

In Armorik, that called is Britayne,

leaves no doubt that, whatever other writers, French or English, meant by their ambiguous *Bretun* or *Brytouns*, Chaucer, by *hir Briton tonge*, meant Breton, the language of Brittany. This bit of scholarly archaism on his part, like others noted by Tatlock (*op. cit.*, pp. 17-37), is unparalleled by anything now in the French lays. The remark was based, in part, on an intelligent assumption, by a poet well-versed in languages, that the original Breton lays must have been in Breton. Whatever the truth about these originals may have been, whatever the divers opinions of modern scholars, it is at least certain that, with one exception, neither Marie de France nor her imitators made any direct extant assertion about the matter: *Tyolet alone*, as has been mentioned, asserts that the originals were in Latin.²¹ So far, therefore, as known French texts are concerned, Chaucer would have had to make his own inference in the matter. Could he not have drawn it, and more clearly, from the reference in the English *Freine*, vs. 232, to the *language of Breteyn* and from the triple assertion in the *Orfeo* prologue, vss. 13-14, that the lays were *ywryte*, *yfounde*, and *ygete* in Brittany? These passages would seem to provide more ample reason for his idea that the lays were also originally in Breton, than anything now extant in French.

The foregoing study of the *Breton-lay Prologue* in the Auchinleck MS as Chaucer's chief source for his ideas about the lays in general, accounts, as we have seen, for all of those ideas. In a text written by a London scribe, in a manuscript far more probably accessible to the poet than any known French text of the lays, in one compact and comprehensive statement, instead of a series of scattered and in one instance contradictory observations, we find here a complete explanation for Chaucer's ideas

²¹ Because of the corrupted forms of Celtic words in Marie's own lays, Gaston Paris (*Rom.*, XIV, 605) thought her ignorant of both Breton and Welsh. James D. Bruce (*Evolution of Arthurian Romance*, I, 63) remarked: "Marie was entirely dependent on intermediate sources in French for her knowledge of these Breton stories." Hoepffner (*Les Lais de Marie de France*, p. 46) inclined to the belief that there were some sources in Breton.

and a close verbal anticipation of one of his couplets. Though we cannot deny the possibility that he had read the Old French lays with their various references to the type as, most assuredly, the author of the *Freine-Orfeo Prologue* had done, the balance of reasonable probability inclines against the supposition that within some fifty years two English poets should have extracted from their reading in the French lays precisely the same ideas and even the same words, the same rime, to describe them. The Auchinleck *Prologue* accounts for everything that Chaucer actually says and we have no reason for going beyond his own statements. To all intents and purposes the *Franklin's Prologue* is simply a suavely charming summary of the earlier passage.

SIR ORFEO

The oldest extant text of this lay appears in the Auchinleck MS. Is there any evidence, quite apart from its prologue, that it was known to Chaucer? In particular, does it account for any elements found in the poet's own so-called Breton lay, or for any found elsewhere in his verse?

Whatever his sources, the English author of *Orfeo* tells his touching lay as a story of married lovers; indeed he makes of their simple but tender relationship his primary motivation:

“Whider þou gost, ichil wiþ þe, 127
And whider y go, þou shalt wiþ me.”

He emphasizes the early joy, the tragic grief of separation, the happy restoration to each other of this deeply loving pair.²² His self-styled Breton lay knows nothing, to be sure, of aristocratic sentiments, of *service* or of *soveraynetee*, and his story in its lack of these courtly elements is admittedly as different from the *Franklin's Tale* as its narrative pattern is different. But none the less it explains, *as no other Breton lay can do*, just why Chaucer identified *this particular type of story with the particular theme* of married lovers. For it must be granted that other Breton lays do not deal with this theme, but with its opposite. In the two instances in the French lays in which a once loving marriage is even touched upon, it is done in the briefest manner and only

²² For special expressions of marital devotion in *Orfeo* see vss. 121-28; 173-76; 209-10; 321-40. All references to *Orfeo* are to the text in W. H. French and C. B. Hale, *Middle English Metrical Romances* (N. Y., 1930).

to set the stage for the liaison that follows immediately.²³ The French lays, in short, follow the courtly love tradition; they are *typically* concerned with marital infidelity or with love without marriage. For Chaucer, therefore, to have chosen to call his own story of married lovers a Breton lay would have been something in the nature of a literary contradiction, had we not, in this unsophisticated English version, the witness of at least one Breton lay devoted to this otherwise altogether exceptional theme.

There are further correspondences between Chaucer's lay and *Orfeo*. Slight in themselves,—for after all Chaucer's whole use of Breton lay material was slight,—they add up, even for the *Franklin's Tale* alone, into a curious series of parallels. In both are heroines of special virtue, each one devoted to an equally loyal husband; each lady goes in the Maytime into a fair garden where she is wooed by a most unwelcome suitor. Each lady is overcome by frantic grief when the suitor has power to separate her from her husband: Herodis was *reueysed out of witt* (*Orfeo*, vs. 81); Dorigen was *half as she were mad* (*Fr. T.*, vs. 1511). Each lady is visited in her private room by her husband to whom she tells her helpless woe; each lady receives from him, not reproach, but such tender re-assurance as he can give. Each husband is grief-stricken:

When King Orfeo herd þis cas,	173
“O we,” quath he, “allas, allas,	
Lever me were to lete mi liif	
þan þus to lese þe Quen mi wiif. . . .”	
þe King into his chaumber is go. . . .	194
And made swiche diol and swiche mon.	196
“I [Arveragus] hadde wel levere ystiked for to be	
For verray love which that I to yow have	
But if ye sholde youre trouthe kepe and save. . . .”	
But with that word he brast anon to wepe.	1480

Each story, different as it is from the other, nevertheless agrees, not only in the fore-going elements, but in the far more important fact that each turns, as on a pivot, on the all-essential idea of troth-keeping. Orfeo recovers Herodis because the Fairy King

²³ Cf. Marie's lay of *Eliduc*, vss. 9-12; also the later *Tydorel* (*Rom.*, VIII, 67), vss. 9-16.

must keep his word, an incident of which we shall say more below; Arveragus, by keeping faith with his own avowal:

Trouthe is the hyeste thing that man may kepe. 1479

not only preserves Dorigen's promise, but recovers the lady herself. These correspondences, let me hasten to say, are not presented as sources, for the *Filocolo* was, as we have already observed (note 11), Chaucer's primary source, but because they explain the one real enigma of the *Franklin's Tale*, i.e., just why Chaucer should have called his own transformation of the Italian story a Breton lay. For it has never, I believe, been recognized, that in *Filocolo*²⁴ and in *Orfeo* we find also these same corresponding elements, the devoted wife and husband, the garden, the suitor, the tragic interview of husband and wife, the promise keeping. Again, none of these elements was derived in the one story from the other, but they serve to explain why, to a poet familiar with both narratives, the merging of the one under the name type of the other, should have seemed a natural thing. By calling his own version a Breton lay, he could, as it were, date it as remote from *oure dayes*; he could account for both its emphasis on the marvelous and on loving marriage. He could be sure, with *Orfeo* before him, that the material of a lay was not, in certain matters, too unlike the Italian story he had set himself to transform.

There are still other indications, outside the *Franklin's Prologue* and *Tale*, that Chaucer was indebted to *Orfeo*. The English lay seems best to account for most of that fairy lore which, so sparingly, Chaucer did admit to a few of his tales. The *Wife's Tale* begins with brief mention of "th'olde dayes of the Kyng Arthour," of the *Britouns*, and the elf-queen and "hir joly compaignye." A woeful knight wandering in a forest comes upon their fairy dance:

But certainly, er he came fully there, 995
Vanysshed was this daunce, *he nyste where*.

In *Orfeo* the woeful king likewise comes in his forest wandering upon a fairy dance:

²⁴ *Opere Volgari* (Florence, 1827-34), VIII, 48-60. For a brief synopsis see Tatlock, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

Pe King o Fairi wiþ his rout	281
Com to hunt him all about . . .	
No neuer <i>he</i> [Orfeo] <i>nist whider</i> þai bicome.	286
And oþerwhile he seize oþer þing:	295
Kniztes and leuedis com daunceing	
And al maner menstracie.	

The parallel here is slight, amounting to little more than similarity of situation, but it is not, particularly in view of other correspondences, negligible. In the *Merchant's Tale* the use of *Orfeo* is more decisively indicated. No one, says Chaucer, could tell

The beautee of the gardyn and the welle,	2036
That stood under a laurer alwey grene.	
Ful ofte tyme he Pluto and his queene,	
Proserpina, and al hire fayerye,	
Disporten hem and maken melodye	
Aboute that welle, and daunced, as men tolde.	

Pluto, that is kyng of Fayerye,	2227
And many a lady in his compaignye,	
Folwyng his wyf, the queene Proserpyna, . . .	
This kyng of Fairye thanne adoun hym sette.	2234

Here we have a complete metamorphosis of that dark royal pair who, in classical tradition and in Chaucer's own earlier work, are represented as ruling over their own special dominion, the kingdom of the dead. In the *House of Fame* Chaucer had written:

Of Pluto and of Proserpyne,	1511
That quene ys of the derke pyne.	

In the Orpheus story, in his own translation of the *De Consolatione Philosophie* of Boethius, he referred to Pluto as the "lord and juge of soules" (Bk. III, M. 12). Yet here in the *Merchant's Tale* he makes of them gay fairy folk, singing and dancing with other fairies in an incredibly beautiful garden. What accounts for the change?

In *Orfeo*, as Kittredge²⁵ long ago made plain, the Orpheus story, in becoming medievalized, must have passed through "the

²⁵ *Amer. Jour. Phil.*, VII (1886), pp. 176-202. Cf. also R. S. Loomis, *MLN*, LI (1936), pp. 28 ff.

crucible of Celtic fancy." Yet despite the glittering Celticized picture of the Otherworld which the English *Orfeo* presents, a place "briht so sonne on somers day," and cheerfully likened to the very "court of Paradis" (vss. 349-74), there remains unmistakable reminiscence of the land of the dead. All about Orfeo sees people lying in the attitudes of death:

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Sum stode wiþouten hade,
And sum non armes nade,
And sum þurch þe bodi hadde wounde,
And sum lay wode, ybounde,
And sum armed on hors sete,
And sum astrangled as þai ete,
And sum were in water adreynt,
And sum wiþ fire alforschreynt: . . .

But "her maister King" (vs. 411) and the "riche Quen" (vs. 444), ruling over these quiet ones, are also the same sportive folk of fairy whose description has already been quoted; we have no names in *Orfeo* but incontestably this King and Queen *o Fairi* rule that kingdom of the dead which is *the dominion peculiar to Pluto and Proserpina alone*. The transformation of the two rulers of the dead into fairy folk had taken place in *Orfeo*; it leaves nothing unaccounted for in Chaucer's concept. That concept was not due to those casual "confusions between fairyland and the lower world" to which Professor Spencer and others have called attention, nor to some single identification of Proserpina with the fairy queen which Professor Robinson noted in the late fourteenth century French romance of *Arthur of Little Britain*,²⁶ but of something much more exact. Chaucer's words concern Pluto no less than Proserpina, and whatever accounts for the transformed concept of the one must also account for the transformed concept of the other.

An additional indication that Chaucer's Pluto, transformed into this fairy king, was directly inspired by the fairy king of the dead in *Orfeo*, is given in the promise incident in the two poems. In *Orfeo* the fairy king, after promising the unknown minstrel what he will, almost refuses Orfeo's request for Herodis; the king is then admonished by Orfeo:

²⁶ Theodore Spencer, "Chaucer's Hell," *Speculum*, II (1927), pp. 183 ff.; Robinson, *Chaucer*, p. 820, vs. 2038, note.

“O sir,” he seyde, “gentil King,
Ȝete were it a wele fouler þing
To here a lesing of þi mouþe,
So, sir, as ȝe seyde nouþe,
What I wold aski, have y schold,
And nedes þou most þi word hold.” 461

Can we doubt that this very passage was in Chaucer’s memory when, somewhat sardonically, he made his own fairy king avow:

“but sith I swoor myn ooth 2312
That I wolde graunten hym his sighte ageyn,
My word shal stonde, I warne yow certeyn.
I am a kyng, it sit me noght to lye.”

No other such moralizing as this occurs in any known version of the story of the Blind Husband and the Pear Tree.²⁷ No other such king, so far as is now known, makes any such avowal. We are not, it should be clear, attempting merely to equate one royal promise with another, nor are we concerned with the origins or with the familiarity of the Rash Promise as a fictional motif.²⁸ Our concern is exclusively with this particular kind of a king who is, moreover, linked with this particular kind of moralizing about promises. An English versifier, it would appear, who had a Celticized classical story before him, made out of it, out of his own ignorance, and out of his own simple precepts of morality, a new combination. He did not know even who Pluto was, for he used the name for the mortal father of his hero (v. 29), but he kept the double character, found no doubt in his source, of the fairy king who ruled the *Totenreich*, and he emphasized the moral necessity of royal promises. For this curious linking, used with precisely the same artless naiveté that characterizes the rest of the lay, there appears to be no parallel save in the *Merchant’s Tale*. Chaucer, who knew all about Pluto, likewise transforms him in this one instance, name and all, into a moralizing fairy king. He uses the concept ironically, wittily, but to assume that this precise and most singular parallel was achieved without reference to *Orfeo*, is to stretch credulity too far.

²⁷ This assurance comes from Dr. Germaine Dempster, who has studied all the known versions in preparation for her chapter on the *Merchant’s Tale* in *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, ed. Bryan and Dempster.

²⁸ For a good bibliography on Celtic Rash Promises see Nitze and Cross, *Lancelot and Guinevere* (Chicago, 1930), p. 49, n. 3.

The discussion of Chaucer's possible use of this third lay in the Auchinleck MS has been kept to the last, not because it is the most important or the most convincing, but because it is the least so. If the arguments and evidence already given have not, individually and cumulatively, brought conviction, then the matters now to be brought forth, will be judged even more negligible. If, on the other hand, it has come to seem probable that Chaucer did read the *Breton-lay Prologue* and *Orfeo* in this manuscript, then the lay of *Sir Degaré* would naturally have fallen within the scope of his reading and may well be considered as explaining an otherwise unexplained episode at the beginning of the *Wife's Tale*, a story which we have already seen some reason to connect with *Orfeo*.

In th' olde dayes of the Kyng Arthour, 857
Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
Al was this land fulfild of fayerye. . . .

And so bifel it that this kyng Arthour 882
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day cam ridynge fro ryver;
And happed that, allone as she was born,
He saugh a mayde walkynge hym biforn,
Of which mayde anon, maugree hir heed,
By verray force, *he rafte hir maydenhed.*

Whether Chaucer intended this as a thrust at Arthurian chivalry or not, it is certain that a close parallel for the situation exists in *Sir Degaré*. The poem begins:

In Litel Bretaygne was a kyng 8
Of gret poer in alle þing.

This nameless king has a daughter who loses herself in a forest:

þan segh hi swich a sizt: 87
Toward hire comen a knigt,
Gentil, zong, and iolif man; . . .
“Damaisele, welcome mote þou be; 96
Be þou afered of none wihȝte;
Iich am comen here a fairi knyȝte; 98
Forþi afered be þou nowt: . . . 101
þou best mi lemman ar þou go 105
Weþer þe likeȝ wel or wo.”

Þo noþing ne coude do zhe
 But wep and criede and wolde fle:
 And he anon gan hire atholde,
 And dide his wille, what he wolde.
*He binam hire here maidenhod.*²⁹

In these two preliminary episodes in the *Wife's Tale* and in *Degaré*, each serving as the incidental opening to a more important main story, we have the same association of *Britoun land* with fairy folk, the same emphasis on a king's noble knight, and the same situation, a helpless maiden ravished by this "noble" knight. When we reflect that no other known version of the Loathly Lady story has the rape incident for its introduction, that this was again, so far as we know anything about it, Chaucer's private and peculiar contribution,³⁰ the probability that he borrowed it from something already associated in his mind with *Britoun* fairy tale is heightened. It is no true objection that this lay of *Degaré* is not Arthurian, and so cannot account for the specific Arthurian opening of the *Wife's Tale*. Arthurian allusions in the lays were always the exception, not the rule,³¹ but none the less Chaucer's own words show that for him Breton lays, Arthur, and *fayerye*, were all somehow linked together. *Britoun* tradition never had for him the importance of classical story; at best he treated it briefly with a kind of sophisticated amusement, not devoid of irony. To him who laughed at *the trewe story of Launcelot de Lake*, the unconscious naiveté of the noble

²⁹ *Sir Degaré* (Auchinleck MS), ed French and Hale, op. cit., p. 291.

³⁰ Cf. G. H. Maynadier, *The Wife of Bath's Tale* (London, 1901), pp. 111 ff. He observed that the rape incident appeared in none of the French, Irish, or Scandinavian analogues to the *Wife's Tale*. He found the only parallels to Chaucer's use of the incident in the English ballad, *The Knight and the Shepherd's Daughter* (Child, No. 110), to which the earliest allusion dates from 1621, and the Danish ballad, *Ebbe Galt* (Gruntvig-Olrik, No. 314). Since Maynadier himself queries (p. 115): "Why assume any influence on the ballad but Chaucer's?" we need not consider it further. The undatable Danish ballad begins with the rape incident but offers no further parallel to Chaucer's story, for it then sets forth the execution of the ravisher. Neither ballad has any touch of fairy lore.

³¹ In the French lays Arthurian allusions occur in *Launval* and in *Chievrefueil*. In Chestre's English lay of *Launfal* (cf. above, n. 5), Chaucer might have read the following:

Be dougty Artours dawes
 Þat helde Engelond yn good lawes,
 Þer fell a wondyre cas
 Of a ley þat was ysette,
 Þat hyzt Launual . . .

Sir Launfal, ed. French and Hale, op. cit., p. 345.

fairy knight who nonetheless ravished the helpless maiden, may have seemed equally entertaining. But since it was told in a Breton lay, Chaucer would not have hesitated, we may be sure, at the moment when he was inventing a new beginning to an old *Britoun* story, to intensify its interest by turning the fairy knight, that *zong and iolif* man (who was to be Degaré's father) into the *lustly bachelor* of Arthur's household.

CONCLUSION

The evidence here given seems to show that the *Franklin's Prologue* with its nine specific ideas about Breton lays was based on the *Breton-Lay Prologue* of *Freine* and *Orfeo*; that for the *Franklin's Tale* Chaucer got from *Orfeo* the altogether exceptional idea of associating the Breton-lay type with the theme of married love; that for the *Wife's Tale* and the *Merchant's Tale* he made use of the fairy lore he found in *Orfeo*. The unique identification in this lay of the sportive fairy king and queen with the king and queen of the dead, the altogether exceptional double character of, not one or the other, but of both together, and this in conjunction with moralizing about promises, is apparently to be found nowhere else, except in the *Merchant's Tale*. For the *Wife's Tale* Chaucer seems to have borrowed from *Degaré* the incident of the maiden ravished by the knight. Though it is, of course, possible that Chaucer read these different lays in different texts, still all that we know about fourteenth century manuscripts of English verse, leads us to suppose that he must have read them in collections and not in single texts. All the lays, as we know, occur in the Auchinleck MS, which antedated Chaucer and was made in London. The probability that he read the lays in this manuscript is further strengthened by the presence here of the "Matter of England" romances, *Horn Childe*, *Beves of Hamtoun*, and *Guy of Warwick* which he names together in *Sir Thopas*. *Horn Childe*, to which Chaucer makes the only known allusions, is found only here; so also is the stanzaic *Guy of Warwick*, a unique version which there is reason to believe was made especially for the Auchinleck MS. As I have pointed out elsewhere, Chaucer used this stanzaic *Guy* in conjunction with the couplet version, and nowhere else, so far as we know, or have reason to believe, could he have found them together. In view of the rarity with which medieval manuscripts tend to

duplicate each other, as wholes, even less than as parts, the evidence here brought together that our poet names or shows familiarity with seven different texts from the same volume, three of them unique, justifies the conclusion that it was this very book which must once have been in his hands. He did not use it much or long, but that he did use it for four of his *Canterbury Tales*, for lore about fairies and *Britouns* and lays, seems a demonstrable, as well as a very pleasant and natural fact.

CHAUCER AND THE AUCHINLECK MS: *THOPAS AND GUY OF WARWICK**

CHAUCER names *Guy of Warwick* among the "romances of prys" of which he makes such delightful fun in *Sir Thopas*. No one questions that he knew this romance and knew it well. Years ago Miss Caroline Strong¹ showed how extensively he was indebted to it for phrasings and details and even incidents of his burlesque. Though most of her forty odd quotations were taken from the Auchinleck *Guy*, she avoided, as scholars generally do, all discussion of Chaucer's actual manuscript source.

It is with this phase of the matter that the present inquiry has to do. My concern is primarily with the Auchinleck MS itself and the interesting question whether Chaucer ever had this manuscript, to us so famous and so venerable, in his hands. Quite apart from *Guy of Warwick* there is, I believe, evidence of his use of other Auchinleck romances, but in no other case is the evidence so ample, the possible tests so various, as in connection with the long-winded *Guy*. The question must, therefore, be decided on the basis of the one romance of which he made the fullest use. "Auntrous" as the attempt may seem to be, I venture with some confidence to present certain new considerations, and especially to present a new method for giving us, in this matter, an "approximation to certainty" that Chaucer did read *Guy of Warwick* in this particular manuscript.

The idea will, no doubt, at the outset encounter that instinctive opposition which, as R. W. Chambers has observed

* From *Essays and Studies in Honor of Carleton Brown* (New York, 1940), pp. 111-28.

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¹ Strong, "Sir Thopas and Sir Guy," *MLN*, XXIII (1908), 73 ff. and 102 ff. Except for certain essential instances, I have avoided duplicating Miss Strong's material.

apropos of a Shakespearean autograph, meets things that are too good to be true. It will seem fundamentally improbable and impossible to prove that to this "olde book," in which there is no clue to aid us except the internal evidence of certain texts, the poet himself had access. The pleasure of believing that what he once handled we too can touch recoils upon itself in disbelief. Yet indubitably he read some English manuscript and the most zealous skeptic must admit that in this one rare instance, at least, there is no reason against the possibility of Chaucer's having seen the volume.

In the first place, there is the matter of date. Unlike the majority of our extant Middle English manuscripts, this one does not date from the fifteenth century. The Auchinleck MS, it is all but unanimously agreed, was written in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Not only does the writing suggest a date before 1350, but the whole volume contains no allusion to anything later than the death of Edward II (1327) and a prayer for the next "zong kyng," Edward III.² In the second place, this book, though invaluable today, cannot, in its own time, have been of great cost and so beyond the reach of a booklover of comfortable means. Like nearly all contemporary manuscripts written in English its appeal and its value were both of popular character. Its miniatures alone, even the few that vandals have left, tell the tale; they are neither large nor of that expert workmanship which distinguishes more costly books. At a glance any one can see that this book is in a different category altogether from that finely illuminated vellum Missal, which is still in Westminster Library, and for which in 1384 the Abbot Lytlington paid the equivalent of \$2,200.³ The Auchinleck MS now numbers 334 leaves, but, though large and well written, it was, assuredly, never designed for a prince's pleasure, but only for some prosperous citizen. Finally, it would appear from recent investigations that most of the manuscript was written by London scribes, a fact which gives us some basis for believing that it still remained, in Chaucer's

² E. Zetzl, *An Anonymous Short Eng. Metrical Chronicle*, EETS, 196 (1935), xvi. For the date and a good list of authorities dealing with the Auchinleck MS, see J. M. Booker, *A Middle English Bibliography* (Heidelberg, 1912), p. 54. For the date alone, see also *Amis and Amiloun*, ed. MacEdward Leach, EETS, 203 (1937), p. xc, n. 1.

³ For Lytlington's Missal see Eric Millar, *Eng. Illuminated MSS, XIV-XV Centuries* (Paris, 1928), p. 28, Pl. 71-72. For an illuminated page from the Auchinleck MS, see the Maitland Club edition of *Beves of Hamtoun* (Edinburgh, 1838).

day, in the city where it was written. According to Kölbing's⁴ old but outstanding study, five scribes wrote the text; the first and most important of these scribes, the *a*-man, wrote 35 of the 44 extant items. Among these was his copy of the *Seven Masters (Sages) of Rome*, ff. 65-99. In Brunner's⁵ edition of this poem, published in 1933, the London origin of this scribe was authoritatively established, but the significance of the fact for the largest part of the whole manuscript has been strangely overlooked. In 1935 the London origin of Kölbing's third scribe, the *y*-man, was established by Zettl.⁶ This scribe wrote the couplet version of *Guy of Warwick* and also the *Short Metrical Chronicle* which Zettl edited. No adequate linguistic studies for the other three scribes are available,⁷ but if the two who wrote more than three fourths of the whole compilation were of London, the manuscript itself may justly be called a London production.

The lack of any chronological, economic, or geographical reason against Chaucer's having seen this special volume is, of course, no argument; it merely establishes a pleasant possibility. About the history of the manuscript itself we have no information before the day in 1744 when it was given by Alexander Boswell, father of the famous James, to the Faculty of Advocates of the University of Edinburgh.⁸ Since then the book has been repeatedly examined, and a wealth of fine scholarship has gone into the editing of single texts. With the exception, however, of such early editors as Laing and Scott,⁹ who gave comprehensive accounts of the whole manuscript, or of Kölbing, whose description is still the best in print, few people have concerned them-

⁴ Kölbing, "Vier Romanzen-Handschriften," *Englische Studien*, VII (1884), 177-191 (The Auchinleck MS).

⁵ Karl Brunner, *The Seven Sages of Rome*, *EETS*, 191 (1933), pp. xxv-xxvii.

⁶ Zettl, *op. cit.*, p. cxxi.

⁷ Carr, "Notes on a Middle Eng. Scribe's Methods," *Univ. of Wis., Studies in Lang. and Lit.*, II (1918), 153 ff. In this study of the Auchinleck *a*-scribe, Miss Carr rightly complained (pp. 153, 157, n. 10) of the fact that in editions of twelve of the thirty-five poems copied by this scribe, no single editor referred to other editions for pertinent facts or theories about *a*'s dialect, or even betrayed knowledge that these and other poems were written by him.

⁸ Kölbing, *Eng. Stud.*, VII, 178; W. H. Hulme, *The ME. Harrowing of Hell*, *EETS*, ES, 100 (1907), xi-xiv. The MS is still in Edinburgh in the National Library (Adv. MS 19. 2. 1). It is a pleasure to acknowledge the helpful courtesy of M. R. Dobie, Keeper of MSS, in replying to questions and in facilitating my use of the MS.

⁹ David Laing, *A Penniworth of Witte* (Edinburgh, 1857), pp. xiii-xxxi; Sir Walter Scott, *Sir Tristrem* (Edinburgh, 1819, 4th ed.), pp. lxxxii and cvii-cxxvi.

selves with the manuscript as a whole. In only one instance, so far as I know, has it ever been really discussed in connection with Chaucer. It was then briefly, and as I believe wrongly, dismissed with the observation that for his quotation in *Thopas* from *Beves of Hamtoun*, Chaucer must have used not the Auchinleck text of *Beves*, but some lost manuscript.¹⁰

Before turning to a new analysis of the material in the Auchinleck volume, we may well pause to ask the means by which, in any such case, we might hope to establish that a medieval author used one, rather than another, manuscript. One advantage, for such an inquiry, the medieval book had over the modern—no two were ever exactly alike. Of one hundred and thirty-five manuscripts, for instance, which have recently been collated by Professor Jacob Hammer for his projected edition of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, no two were found to be exact duplicates. The medieval book was not made for or by mass production; it was written, as we all know, by individual scribes who varied, to greater or less extent, from the text they copied. Even in the matter of compilation no two volumes, at least of romances extant in Middle English, are ever of exactly the same content. For these obvious reasons, then, it is less hopeless than might at first appear to say with some confidence that a medieval author who shows himself aware of certain texts read them in a particular manuscript. Ideally, before

¹⁰ E. Kölbing, *Beves of Hamtoun*, EETSSES, 46, 48, 65 (1885-1886), 219, l. 12 n.; see also *Eng. Stud.*, XI (1888), 504. Kölbing's collation of the MSS in his edition of *Beves* (p. 1) showed that Chaucer must have used the Auchinleck *Beves* or the lost source of a fifteenth-century MS C (Cbg., Univ. Lib., Ff. II. 38). The Auchinleck *Beves* reads:

Lordinges, herkneþ to me tale! I (1-4)
Is merier þan þe niȝtingale . . .
Of a kniȝt ich wile zow rounne.

The italicized words appear also in the same order in *Thopas*, st. 19. But Kölbing accepted C as Chaucer's source because, like *Thopas*, it has *lystniþ* for *herkneþ* and omits the *is* of l. 2; he did not consider the unimportance of *is*, nor the fact that in *Thopas*, ll. 712, 833, *listeth*, l. 893, *herkneth*, Chaucer used these words at will and not by rote. The fact that Chaucer kept twelve out of seven words including the important riming phrase, *to me tale*, seems decisive evidence for his use of the Auchinleck *Beves*.

Lordinges, lysteniþ, grete and smale. *Beves*, C, l. 1
Yet listeth, lordes, to my tale *Thopas*, l. 833

For this variation in C Kölbing offered no explanation save the possibility of a "lost version." The evidence that follows of Chaucer's use of the Auchinleck versions of *Guy of Warwick* still further confirms his use of the Auchinleck *Beves*. All quotations from Chaucer are from F. N. Robinson's invaluable edition, *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Boston, 1933).

making such an assertion, we might demand that the following conditions be fulfilled. Granting that the manuscript in question be of such origin that the later author might have known it, we would say that it must have:

1. A unique combination of texts
2. One or more unique texts
3. Unique readings in one or more of its texts

In other words, if a medieval author shows himself aware of *texts found together only in one manuscript*, and of *texts that are found nowhere else*, and of *readings that occur nowhere else*, we may feel that in all human probability this was the manuscript that he read. Though we cannot, in view of all the manuscripts known to be lost, give too much importance to the fact that today a manuscript text is unique, still we cannot refuse to credit the converging evidence of unique combination of texts and of unique readings in those texts. For we have, after all, the positive evidence of all our still extant manuscripts to establish their essential individuality. Manuscripts can be grouped by families, relationships can be traced, but in Middle English at least it is certain that no compilation of romances exists which is an exact copy of any other. It is, therefore, fundamentally improbable that a manuscript satisfying not one but all of the exact and peculiar conditions noted above should ever have been duplicated. It must have been the actual manuscript known to the medieval author.

The first presumptive piece of evidence that Chaucer once had the Auchinleck MS in hand comes from *Thopas*, st. 29, where he names together three "Matter of England" romances:

Men speken of romances of prys
Of Horn child and of Ypotys,
Of Beves and of sir Gy.

The crux of the matter here is the allusion, for it is the only known allusion, to *Horn Child*,¹¹ a romance which exists *only* in

¹¹ *Horn Child*, ed. by J. Hall in *King Horn* (Oxford, 1901), pp. 179-192. Cf. L. A. Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in England* (New York, 1924, second ed. 1960), pp. 97 ff.; Trounce, "The English Tail-Rhyme Romances," *Medium Aevum*, I (1932), p. 93, n. 18. Trounce strangely urges that Chaucer was derisively alluding to the older, better romance, *King Horn*, and not to its tail-rime sequel, *Horn Child*. Since Chaucer borrowed nothing but the name from either poem, our only certainty is the fact that, for some reason, he associated the name with those of Guy and Beves. For this the Auchinleck MS alone offers a concrete explanation. In this MS the title of *Horn Child* is written in red and had originally a miniature

the Auchinleck MS. Beves of Hampton and Guy of Warwick were, to be sure, popular heroes whose names were commonly coupled together and whose stories still appear together in a Cambridge manuscript, University Library, Ff. II. 38, but in no other instance are they conjoined with *Horn Child*. That Chaucer's association of the three together was not a matter of chance is proved by the Auchinleck MS.

It may be remarked to the skeptic, who recalls that the four other poems¹² named in *Thopas* are not found in this volume, that on this point no argument can be based. For one thing, it is certainly not my intention to maintain that the Auchinleck MS was the only English book known to our English poet; but, for another, it is worth pointing out that every one of these four English poems and certain others, which it is probable that Chaucer knew, may once have been included in this very volume. Bulky as it still is, it is a mutilated book. The original numbering shows that at least fourteen items have been lost from it, to say nothing of whole pages torn out here and there. Five of these lost original items came at the very beginning of the manuscript. In this varied assortment of English verse, nearly all contemporary types of poetry were represented; the didactic *Ypotys*¹³ may have been there, along with the romances, since *Owain Miles*, ff. 25-31, and the long didactic English poem, the *Speculum Gy de Warwyke*, ff. 39-48, still are there. Equally, of course, these other texts may never have been included. About that, in all probability, we shall never know. Our only certainty is that the otherwise unknown *Horn Child* is here found with *Beves* and *Guy*, and that Chaucer mentions the three together.

It is to this particular matter of combination, now to be illustrated in a variety of ways, that I would direct attention as a new means, in this connection, of testing Chaucer's use of a

below it, facts which may have attracted Chaucer's attention. Cf. *Eng. Stud.*, VII, p. 190, no. 41.

¹² The didactic *Ypotys* and the romances of *Pleyndamour* (now lost), *Libeaus Desconus*, and *Perceval of Galles*. For MSS and editions of these and other romances here mentioned, see J. E. Wells, *Manual of Writings in Middle English* (New Haven, 1916), and later supplements.

¹³ Early fourteenth-century fragments of *Ypotys* were published by Miss Sutton, *PMLA*, XXXI (1936), 114 ff. I owe much to the suggestion of Miss Everett, *Rev. Eng. Studies*, VI (1930), 447, who first called attention to two collections which alike contained *Ypotys* and *Libeaus* in texts copied by one scribe.

particular text. In literary scholarship we are all inclined, it would appear, to give large credence to the possible workings of chance, of coincidence, and to distrust almost wholly, so far as Middle English romances are concerned, the possibility of ever proving that any particular phrase or detail ever came from one particular source. In view of the conventional character of the romances, this sense of impossibility is not surprising. The "parallel phrase" method is now without honor as a method of establishing either source or common authorship. But the case is different, we must all admit, when we have to do with *a large number of particular and peculiar combinations*. It is inconceivable, even with the most conventionalized materials, that either chance or convention should account for a whole series of combinations, and combinations of different kinds, which are peculiar to Chaucer and this one manuscript alone. Coincidence has a long arm but is not Briareus.

We have already noted one combination of different texts which the Auchinleck MS alone preserves, and which Chaucer alone mentions. A second similar combination occurs in *Guy of Warwick* itself, for in this one manuscript the romance is presented in two different versions, a couplet version, ff. 108-146, written by the *y*-scribe, and a twelve-line, tail-rime stanzaic version, ff. 146-167, written by the *a*-scribe. The first is known in other manuscripts;¹⁴ the latter only in the Auchinleck MS. The story is presented in these two Auchinleck versions in almost continuous form. The unexplained change from the couplet to the stanzaic form may, though I base no argument on the possibility, represent no new source but only a deliberate shifting, in the work of a hack-author, after 7,306 lines in couplets, to another metrical form. A similar shifting is to be observed in *Beves of Hamtoun*, ff. 176-221, in this same manuscript. The fourth or *y*-scribe, who copied this romance, wrote lines 1-474 in six-line, tail-rime stanzas; the remaining 4,212 lines in couplets.¹⁵ But whether this interpretation be true or not, that the Auchinleck authors and scribe sometimes themselves shifted, *in mediis rebus*, from one verse form to another, there is no question but that the stanzaic *Guy of Warwick* is unique and that in this one manuscript alone

¹⁴ Cf. Wells, *Manual*, pp. 16, 764; Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in Eng.*, p. 138.

¹⁵ Kölbing, *Beves*, p. xi, remarked in connection with these and other instances of metrical changes in the romances: "the reason is altogether unknown."

it is combined with the couplet version of *Guy*. This is a matter of vital importance to our inquiry. That Chaucer used the two versions conjointly, that he sometimes neatly dovetailed them together, as in the peculiar account of *Thopas's* amorous charms, st. 6, his bird-inspired love-longing, st. 10, his complaint of being bound by love, st. 13, his vow to forsake all women, his seeking a *pryve* place and going by *dale and downe*, st. 14-15—these things are susceptible of proof. It is impossible to account for Chaucer's use of *Guy of Warwick* except on the basis of these two versions. It is this combination which points most urgently to his use of the Auchinleck MS.

The proof of this statement lies in the large number of small but specific combinations, largely but not entirely verbal, which we can trace throughout the two versions of this one manuscript, but not in any other manuscript of *Guy*. The individual elements of these combinations are, admittedly, often slight and almost wholly conventional. Chaucer used them with such merry and matchless skill, so ordering and transforming and varying them, that the full measure of his imitation has, even under close scrutiny, escaped detection.¹⁶ Readers of *Thopas* get an amusing sense of general rather than specific imitation, but there can be no final question, after we have traced out the combinations given below, of their cumulative significance. No matter how the identical words or phrases or rimes, the specific details and concepts are manipulated by a master wit to produce an effect at once so like and yet so different in *Thopas*, the little linked groups of these elements in the parody have a recognizable pattern which betrays the source in some specific passage in the Auchinleck romance.

In checking the statement that these passages are peculiar for the most part to these two texts, we can turn to other manuscripts of *Guy*. Of these the closest by all odds to the Auchinleck MS is the fifteenth-century manuscript, C, Cambridge, Caius College, 107, a text which Zupitza edited in the same volume with the Auchinleck *Guy* (*EETSES*, 42, 49, 59). This C MS, indeed, so largely parallels the Auchinleck MS (henceforth to

¹⁶ Cf. Chaucer, ed. Robinson, p. 842; "No particular romance seems to have been singled out by Chaucer for imitation or attack." This was my own opinion, four years ago, even after concluding a prolonged study of *Sir Thopas* for the volume of *Sources and Analogues of the "Canterbury Tales,"* ed. by Bryan and Dempster.

be referred to as *Guy, A*) that Weyrauch¹⁷ thought it copied from the same source. Thousands of lines are approximately the same, but wherever essential variation does occur, through different wordings or omission, it appears that the Auchinleck text invariably, in the test cases noted below, has the crucial combination of words, phrases, rimes, details, etc., which identifies Chaucer's borrowing. This, I take it is as plain proof as we can ever ask that Chaucer used this particular manuscript for all that he borrowed from *Guy of Warwick*. Whatever we may think in a particular instance, of the possibility that he might, by chance or natural association, have achieved the same combination, it is inconceivable, in so large a series, that all these same combinations should have been a matter of chance. He must have used *Guy, A*, or an identical copy. This conjecture, in the venerable presence of the Auchinleck volume, is needless; it is, moreover, offset by the evidence that the manuscript closest to *Guy, A*, is in these test instances, so different from it, and by the fact, already noted, that the Auchinleck MS alone contains that unique combination of romances which is alluded to by Chaucer.

In the following citations I have used an asterisk to indicate that the passage in question is to be found *only in Guy, A*. In other manuscripts it is either omitted or so changed as to offer no parallel to Chaucer's phrasing. Passages are quoted to show through combinations of identical elements, through exceptional elements, through the special order or the special repetitions of this one text some precise cause for Chaucer's parodistic imitation. Words common to *Guy, A*, and *Thopas* are italicized, but since this means does not always serve, especially in the case of altogether exceptional rimes or meanings, I have, even at the risk of overspecific statement, ventured to analyze, in the footnotes, the significance of many of these passages. What cannot be realized by any one who has not slowly sieved through the stylized sea of Middle English romance is the important fact that nearly all the combinations of elements here noted are, in themselves, unique. Individually, the elements may occur anywhere, everywhere; together, in these specific combinations, these particular patterns, they belong exclusively to *Guy, A*, and to Chaucer's deliberate and delicious parody.

¹⁷ Weyrauch, *Die mitttelenglische Fassungen der Guy of Warwick* (Breslau, 1901), pp. 43, 52-53.

SIR THOPAS

GUY OF WARWICK

st. 1

Listeth, *lordes*, in *good entent*,
And *I wol telle verrayment*

lordinges alle, 238(5-9)*
Mine men *ze ben, verrament . . .*
*Ich biseche zou wiþ gode entent*¹⁸

Al of a knyght was fair and
gent . . .

Al of a gentil knigt . . . 1(3, 11)*

His name was sire Thopas.

His name was hoten sir Gij.

st. 2

Yborn he was in *fer contree*

Þurch mani diuers *cuntray*,
2(5-12)*

In Flaundres, al *biyonde the*
see, . . .

Þat was *bizond þe see. . . .*

His fader was a man ful *free*

Þe king . . . / Þat was boþe hende
& *fre, . . .*

And *lord he was of that*
contree . . .

Ful fer in þe norþ *cuntre*.¹⁹
Þer he was lord of þat *cuntre*.²⁰
71(5)*, 278(5)*

St. 3-4

Sire Thopas wax a *doghty swayn*

Þat *douhti* man of dede.²¹ 10
(6, 12)*, 74(6)*

¹⁸ *Thopas* and *Guy* alike combine the exceptional rime, *entent: verrayment*, with the phrase *gode entent* and the *I* appeal to *lordinges*. Chaucer's form is almost invariably *entente* (Robinson, p. 843, l. 742). In *Guy*, though *verrayment* in all MSS is a frequent rime word, and though *gode entent(e)* occurs several times in a Cbg. MS of *Guy* (Univ. Lib. Ff. II, 38, ed. Zupitza, EETSES, XXV-VI, ll. 1761, 2134, 3818), *Guy, A*, alone rimes this phrase with *verrament*. Chaucer's first stanza thus combines four elements from *Guy, A*, st. 238, with two remarkably similar lines from st. 1. The endlessly repeated minstrel phrase, *I wol telle*, is combined with *His name* in *Isumbras*, st. 1, in *Ipomydon*, B, I, 15, in the *Seven Sages*, 3, 6, but only in *Guy* is this last phrase combined with the exceptional *Al of a knigt*.

¹⁹ The second stanzas of *Guy A*, and of *Thopas* contain the same four rime words, alike repeating *cuntre*. Each stanza speaks of a hero who was born or adventured afar, and of another noble person. No better illustration can be given of Chaucer's power to vary the effect of his original while preserving its essential ideas and its riming pattern. The phrase *in fer contree* is also found in *Guy A*, 1617, 1635, 6117, st. 33 (7), 170 (7).

²⁰ The repetition of this line in the stanzaic section of *Guy, A*,* is noteworthy, for repetitions of this sort seem particularly to have attracted Chaucer's derisive attention. For this line in other romances, see Robinson, p. 843, l. 722, n.

²¹ This line appears twice in *Guy, A*,* st. 10. Its overemphatic *douhti* may have inspired the *doghty* of *Thopas*, st. 3; likewise from *Guy, A*, st. 10-11, Chaucer took other details. See below, n. 26.

His <i>rode</i> is lyk scarlet . . .	Oysel sche . . . wiþ þe <i>rode</i> so rede . . . 5688
<i>His heer</i> , his berd was lyk saffroun,	<i>His here</i> , þat was ȝalu and briȝt ²² . . . 6107
Of Brugges were his hosen broun.	(See below, <i>Thopas</i> , st. 26, <i>hosen</i> in <i>Guy</i>)
	Of cloth of Tars & riche cendel, . . . 709-712
His robe was of <i>syklatoun</i> ,	þe mantels weren of michel priis. Gode cloþes of <i>sikelatoun</i> ²³ & Alisaundrinis. 2835*
st. 5	him lerd 171-175
	Of wodes & <i>riuier</i> & oþer game; . . .
<i>He koude</i> hunte at <i>wilde deer</i> ,	Michel <i>he coupe</i> of <i>hawk</i> & hounde.
	In þat on half orn þe <i>riuier</i> , 6341- 6342*
And ride an <i>haukyng</i> for <i>river</i> . . .	In þat oþer half forest wiþ <i>wilde</i> <i>dere</i> . ²⁴
	on <i>hunting</i> þai gun ride, 4(10), 20(6)
	him rode on <i>dere</i> hunting 11(2)
Of wrastlynge was there <i>noon his</i> <i>peer</i> .	In þe world was <i>non his pere</i> . ²⁵ 256(12)

²² The first 122 lines, now lost, of *Guy, A*, undoubtedly contained, as the closely related Caius MS (C) still does, details from which Chaucer may have borrowed suggestion for *Thopas's* physiognomy. Cf. C, 65, *Hir* (i.e., Felice's) *skynne was white*; C, 68, *nose wel sittyng*. Though Chaucer may equally well have transferred to *Thopas* the whiteness, the nose, the *rede rode*, which are combined in the description of a single lady in *Libeaus* (ed. Kaluza, st. 79), instead of the two ladies in *Guy, A*, still it is certain that only the latter combines these same physical details with additional reference to the hero's yellow hair and to "gode clothes" of *sikelatoun*. See n. 23.

²³ *Guy, A*, alone combines mention of materials from far-off places, their great cost, and specific mention of *sikelatoun*. This unusual word appears elsewhere in ME romance only in *Richard Cœur de Lion*, l. 5268, once contained in the Auchinleck MS, ed. K. Brunner, and in *Florence of Rome*, ed. Viotor, l. 177. There is no evidence that Chaucer knew this last romance.

²⁴ Chaucer's rime, *wilde deer: river*, is noted by Robinson, p. 843, l. 712, as exceptional. It is matched in *Guy, A*, 6341-6342.* Chaucer's meaning *waterfowl* for *river*, as suggested by Robinson, p. 843, l. 737, is precisely matched in *Guy, A*, 171. There are many references to hunting throughout *Guy, A*, but the three references concentrated in st. 4-20 seem particular worthy of note since they are immediately connected with *Guy's* love affair as was also *Thopas's* hunting and love.

²⁵ This line occurs also in *Guy, C*, 9140, in an episode from which, in this

st. 6

Ful *many a mayde, bright in bour,*
They moorne for hym *paramour,*

But he was chaast and no lechour

(See below, st. 14, *forsake*)

þat day Gij dede his miȝt 237-241
To serue þritti *maidens briȝt;*
Al an-*amourd* on him þai were. . . .

Per of no ȝaf he riȝt nouȝt.

He haþ ben desired of *mani* wom-
an 10(6-7)*

& he haþ forsaken hem euerilcan
Of leuedis *briȝt in bour,* . . .

11(6, 9)*

Y pray þe *par amoure.*²⁶

st. 7-8

And so bifel upon *a day,*

For sothe, as I yow telle may

Sire Thopas wolde out ride.

He worth upon *his steede gray,*

And *in his hand a launcegay,*

A long *sword* by his side.

He *priketh* thurgh *a fair forest,*

Therinne is many *a wilde best.*

On a day . . . 5(1), 8(1), 11(1)

for soþe to say²⁷ . . . 2(1), 3(1, 4),

Alle *for soþe y ȝou telle.* 3440

For soþe y ȝou telle may 7292*,

152(3)*.

Gij anon asked *his stede þo,* 4129-

4131

His *sperre,* & his *sword* also;

In his hond a gode sword he bar.

Sir Gij opon þat *stede wond* 251

(4-6)*

Wiþ a gode *glaive in hond,*

& *priked* him forþ his way.²⁸

þai comen into *a fair forest,* 6719-

6720*

Per þai fond a bore, a *wilde best.*

Caius MS, it could not be shown that Chaucer took anything else. In *Guy, A*, it occurs in the Colbrand episode, st. 238-269, from which Chaucer may have taken hints. Cf. citations from these stanzas in connection with *Thopas*, st. 1, 7-8, 16-17, 24-26.

²⁶ The couplet and the stanzaic versions of *Guy, A*, combine to explain the many lovelorn *maidens* in *Thopas*, also that hero's indifference, and the identical riming phrases, *briȝt in bour: paramour*, used in connection with just these same matters. See also the *forsake* parallel, *Thopas*, st. 14.

²⁷ The numerous repetitions of these common tag phrases in the early stanzas of *Guy, A*, seem specifically to account for their early appearance in *Thopas*.

²⁸ The two series of combinations in *Guy, A*, are to be noted, the *steed-sword-in his hond-spear*, of the couplet, the *steed-glaive-in hond-priked* of the stanzaic version. Between them they account for these elements in *Thopas*, st. 7-8. Because of the naturalness of the association, however, these are to be considered the least convincing of the combinations here noted.

st. 10-11

The briddes synge, it is no nay,
Sire Thopas fil in love-longyng,
Al whan he herde the thrustel
synge,
And pryked as he were wood.

So michel he herd þo foules sing,
4519-4537*
Pat him þouzt he was in gret
longing...

Pat hors he prikep . . .²⁹
Pai priked þe stedes . . . 97(4-6)*
& ferd as þai wer wode.
& priked riht as he wer wode. 181
(10)*

st. 13-14 (Thopas about his love)

“O seinte Marie, benedicite!

What eyleth this love at me
To bynde me so soore?
An elf-queene shal my leman be.

For in this world no womman is
Worthy to be my make . . .
Alle othere wommen I forsake

And to an elf-queene I me take
By dale and eek by downe!”

(Guy about his love)

God graunte þe . . . 26(11-12)*
And Marie, his moder swete.
“Leman,” seyð Gij ozain, . . .
24(1-6)*
“Þi loue me haþ so y-bounde³⁰

Y no schal neuer spouse wiman
5(11)*
Y nil neuer spouse wiman . . .”
12(5)*
& he haþ forsaken hem euerilcan
. . . 10(8)*
(i.e., Guy has forsaken all women)
Y schal walk / bi down & dale.³¹
29(9)*

²⁹ The combination of the rime *sing:longing* with the bird-inspired hero and reference to his *pricking* is to be found only in the couplet version of *Guy, A*, and in *Thopas*. Miss Strong, *MLN*, XXIII, 103, noted that over forty times in *Guy, A*, a knight comes *pricking*. Chaucer uses the word eight times in eighty-four lines.

³⁰ *Thopas*, st. 13-14, combines references to *Marie*, *leman*, and to being *bound-by-love*; among the *Guy* MSS these are likewise combined only in *A*, st. 24, 26. In *Guy, C*, 7413, the corresponding passage has only the reference to *leman*.

³¹ Thopas's vow, *alle wommen I forsake*, *And to an elf-queene I me take*, seems to come directly from Chestre's *Launfal* (ed. French and Hale, *Middle Eng. Met. Romances*, 1930), where there is the same theme of the fairy lady (*Here fadyr was kyng of fayrre*, l. 280), and where we find the same promise in rime, *Yf þou wylt truly to me take, / And alle wemen for me forsake*, ll. 316-317. But Chaucer must have had *Guy, A*, equally in mind since this contains, in common with *Thopas*, not only the elements noted above, n. 29-30, but also, in connection with Guy's love affair, the stress on his vow to wed no woman (but one), his vow to walk by *down and dale*, a phrase rarely found in the romances, though common enough in ballads, and finally his coming to a *prive* place.

st. 15

Into his sadel he clamb anon,
And priketh over . . .

he foond, in a pryve woon . . .
For *in* that contre was ther noon
That to *him* durste ride or goon
Neither wyf ne childe.

st. 16

Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,

His name was sire Olifaunt,

A perilous man of dede,
He seyde, "Child, by *Termagaunt*!

On hors þai lopen fot hot³² 97 (2,
4) *

þai priked þe stedes . . .

Sir Gij lepe on his stede fot hot
259(1)*

In *prive* stede stode Gij . . . 4518*

In þis world is man non 148 (7-9)*

þat ozaines him *durst gon*,

Herl, baroun, no knigt.³³

(The Giant Amoraunt)

For he is so michel of bodi y-
pigzt, 63(1-6)

Ozains him tvelue men haue no
migt, . . .

So wonderliche he is long.

(The giant Colbrand)

He was so michel & so vnrede,

þat non hors migt him lede. . . .

255(4-5)

He was so michel & so strong,
& þer-to so wonderliche long. . . .

256(10-11)

So strong he is of dede. 96(3)*

"Hold þi pes," seyde Amoraunt,

121(1-2)*

"For, *bi mi lord sir Teruagaunt*,³⁴

³² These repeated *fot-hot** mountings of Guy in the stanzaic version probably best account for the parodistic leisure of *he clamb* in *Thopas*. All texts of *Guy* contain numerous references to leaping on horseback.

³³ The stanzaic version alone combines the same rime, approximately the same rhythm, the same *durst*, as *Thopas*, st. 15, *Guy*, C, 9138 f. reads, *And so proud, and so fell / That no man myzt with hym dwell*. For the specific reference to *wyf ne childe* in *Thopas* Chaucer probably drew on the Auchinleck copy of the *Seven Sages* (ed. Brunner, EETS, 191, p. 32):

and sent him forth al barfot 711
Wiþ outen leue of *wif* and *child*
And wente into a forest *wild*.

³⁴ The huge size of the two giants, Amoraunt and Colbrand, is emphasized in all texts of *Guy*. *Guy*, A, not only provides similar elephantine suggestions of size, but alone rimes the *-aunt* syllable of the giant's name with the oath, *bi Teruagant* (st. 121), alone uses *of dede* and *seyde* in connection with the giant. (Cf. C, 8414, *Quod Ameraunte*.) The oath by the giant recurs in A, 126 (8).

Anon I sle thy *steede'*

Þe *stedes* nek he dede also . . .
101(2)
þat sadel & hors atvo he smot³⁵
260(10)

st. 17

The *child seyde*, "Also moote I
thee,

As a *child* he stode him vnder³⁶
... 263(3)*
"Tel me," he *seyd*, . . . *so mot y*
the, . . . 110(1-2)

Tomorwe wol I meete with thee

When he seye Amoraunt so
grim . . . 64(7-10)*
þan asked he respite til a day³⁷
(Guy's escape)

st. 18

But faire escapeth child Thopas

& nouzt of flesche atamed is 117
(11-12)*

And al it was thurgh *Goddes gras*

þurch *grace of god* almigt.
þurch *goddes help* 73(9),
86(5), etc.

st. 19

listeth, lordes, to my *tale* . . .

Heraud so trewe in *tale* 42(1, 5)*

How sir Thopas . . .

Prikyng *ouer hill and dale*

He zede *ouer alle* bi doun & *dale*.
(Guy's wedding feast)

st. 16, 20, 21

With harpe and pipe and
symphonye

þer was mirþe & melody, . . . 16
(10)*

þer was trumpes & tabour, 17(1-2)*
Fiþel, croude, & harpour, . . .

³⁵ The duplication in *Guy*, st. 101, 260, of the incident of the horse-slain-by-the-giant is to be noted. Magoun, "The Source of Sir Thopas," *PMLA*, XLII (1927), 833 ff., in arguing for the direct influence of *Libeaus Desconus* on *Thopas*, emphasized the likenesses between the giant combats, the giant's horse-killing, his threats, etc. Undoubtedly Chaucer knew *Libeaus*, but, as *Guy, A*, accounts for much more than *Libeaus*, we must believe that it was *Guy*, not the other romance, which exercised the primary influence on *Thopas*. Thopas's love affair is fully accounted for by *Launfal* and *Guy, A*, and not by the evil *dame d'amour* of *Libeaus*. (See above, n. 31). The giant in *Guy, A*, 126(8)* has a *leman*, a reference which may have served to suggest to Chaucer a connection between the elf-queen and Olifaunt.

³⁶ This unique reference to a child is supplemented, again only in *A*, st. 95(1), by the line, *þis litel knigt þat stont me by*. Both references appear in connection with a giant combat. Did they suggest Chaucer's humorous use of the appellation *Child*?

³⁷ Only *A*, st. 64* and st. 110,* combines in a giant combat story, just as in *Thopas*, st. 17, the familiar phrase, *mot y the*, with the unusual idea of deferring combat.

To make hym bothe *game and
glee*
"Do come," he seyde, "my
mynstrales,
And geestours for to tellen tales

st. 24

And over that a fyn *hawberk*
Was al ywroght of *Jewes werk*.

*Ful strong it was of plate
As whit as is a lilye flour*

st. 25

His sheeld was al of *gold* so reed,
And therinne was a bores heed,
A *charbocle* by his syde.

st. 26

His jambeux were of quyrboilly,

Pe bridal hold wiþ *gamen & gle*
14(5)*

An al maner menstracie . . . 16(11)*
Minstrels of mouþe, & mani dy-
sour 17(5)*

To glade þo bernis bliþe.³⁸

Pe *hauberk* he hadde was *reuis*³⁹
. . . 91(4, 6)

In Ierusalem when he was þare.

Of mailes was nouzt his *hau-
berk*: 256(1-2)

It was al of anoþer *werk*.

*Ful clere it was of mayle*⁴⁰ 92(3-4)*
As brigzt as ani siluer it was

A targe listed wiþ *gold* 93(8),
250(9)*

In the frunt stode a *char-bukel*
ston. 249(10)

Hose & gambisoun so gode knigt
schold, 93(6)*

³⁸ The stanzaic version fully describes Guy's wedding feast. Like *Thopas*, it combines *game and gle*, *minstrels*, and a list of musical instruments.

³⁹ This ghost word *reuis* (for *ieuis*) was due to the Auchinleck scribe's error in writing an *r* for an *i*, just as in the next line he miswrote *Clarels* for *Charles* (Charlemagne). Cf. my article, "Chaucer's *Jewes Werk*," XIV," *Philological Quarterly*, XIV (1935), 371 f. I believe that Chaucer, accustomed to the mistakes of Adam Sciveyn and others, perceived the true significance of the word (a not difficult feat in view of the immediately following reference to Ierusalem), and so took over the corrected word into his own text. No other MS of *Guy* uses the word *ieuis*, nor did the source of the Auchinleck MS, if we accept the reading of C, presumably derived from that same source:

On he had a good *hawberke*: C, 8093-94

Hit was of a full good *werke* . . .

When hit com to Ierusalem. 8096

Though the C text here has Chaucer's rime, *hawberk:werk*, he could have found this in A, 256 (1-2) in a second account of Guy's arming, and nothing is more certain than the fact that Chaucer blended these two accounts in his parody. See n. 41.

⁴⁰ Cf. C, 8107, *Hit was so clere and so bryght*, which altogether misses the Chaucerian parallel of A, st. 92 (3).

	Gloues, & gambisoun, & hosen of mayle 250(5)
His <i>helm</i> of latoun <i>bright</i>	As gode knigt haue scholde. (His hauberk) As <i>brigt as ani</i> siluer 92(4-7)*
His brydel as the <i>sonne shoon</i> ,	þe halle <i>schon</i> þerof as <i>sonne</i> of glas, . . .
	His <i>helme</i> was of so michel migt. An <i>helme</i> he hadde of michel migt 249(7-11)*
	With a cercle of gold, þat <i>schon</i> <i>brigt</i>
	As <i>brigt as ani sonne</i> it <i>shon</i> . ⁴¹
st. 27-28	
Loo, lordes myne, heere is a fit! If ye wol any moore of it, . . .	<i>Now herken</i> , & ze may here 44 (1-2)*
Now holde youre mouth, þar <i>charitee</i> ,	In gest, <i>zif ze wil</i> listen & lere . . . <i>par charitee</i> , 8(10), 11(8), 30(1), 226(10) etc.
	Listeneþ <i>now</i> & sitteþ stille . . . 3997
	More ze schul here <i>zif ze wille</i> 4790
And <i>herkneth</i> to my <i>spelle</i> .	<i>Now wende</i> we ogain to our <i>spelle</i> 4819-4820
Anon I wol yow <i>telle</i> .	þat ze me herd er þan <i>telle</i> ⁴² Y schal now <i>tellen</i> þe. 246(3)
st. 29	
But sir Thopas, he <i>bereth the flour</i>	In world þai <i>bere þe flour</i> 67 (12)*
st. 30	
His <i>goode stede</i> al he <i>bistrood</i>	<i>His gode stede</i> he <i>bi-strod</i> 6411 þe best / þat euer migt <i>bistriden</i> <i>stede</i> 1(5)*
Upon his creest . . . a <i>lilie flour</i>	On þe <i>helme</i> stode a <i>flour</i> 250(1) On þe <i>helm</i> . . . þe <i>floures</i> 105(5), 208(5)

⁴¹ Like Thopas, st. 24-26. the two accounts of Guy's arming alone combine in A, st. 91-93 and A, 249-250, 256, mention of a Jewish *hauberk*, *ful* . . . *it was of plate (mayle), as whit (brigt) as, a golden shield, a charbuncle, jambeux (gambisoun), a bright helm, as the sonne shoon*. Though this decisive list indicates

The long, foregoing list of quotations needs no further commentary; the individual and the cumulative effect can hardly be denied. By taking account not of merely similar isolated elements, but of *identical elements used in similar combinations* throughout the Auchinleck *Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Thopas*, we are able to trace the specific influence of the one text upon the other. The combinations in question, with few exceptions, occur within the space of a few lines in *Guy, A*, or within such closely allied passages as the two accounts of the hero's love, his two armings, his two giant combats.⁴³ By comparison with all the other extant texts of *Guy* we are able to say that they invariably omit or change some significant element in these combinations,⁴⁴ a fact which proves that Chaucer did not use these texts, or rather their fourteenth-century prototypes. From the evidence of *Thopas* alone,⁴⁵ it appears that Chaucer made use of the unique Auchinleck *Horn Child*,⁴⁶ of the Auchinleck text of *Beves of Hamtoun*,⁴⁷ and of the two versions in this volume, one of them unique, of *Guy of Warwick*. He could have found them all together in this one manuscript written by London scribes before 1350. I regret to say that I do not think Chaucer held this medieval omnibus volume in any great "reverence." He had read too long, too critically, in one of its longest and most tedious romances. If we recall the Host's rude condemnation of *Sir Thopas*:

Now swich a rym <i>the devel I biteche!</i>	921
Thy drasty ryming is <i>nat worth a toord!</i>	930

we may, for once, feel fairly sure that the comment represents Chaucer's own feeling about *Guy of Warwick* at least. Because,

Chaucer's associated borrowings from *Guy, A*, he also borrowed, for *Thopas*, st. 26, certain details from *Thomas of Erceldoune*.

⁴² See above, n. 27. The insistent repetition of tag phrases in *Guy, A*, is notable. I have given only a few examples of those closest to Chaucer's imitation.

⁴³ The chief exceptions are the parallels given for *Thopas*, st. 1, 3, 5. The two accounts of Guy's love are in *Guy, A*, 235-245, 4519-4537, and st. 5-19; the two armings, st. 91-93, 249-252, the two combats, st. 95-134, 255-270.

⁴⁴ To save space I have quoted in only a few instances the readings of other MSS, but any one with the various additions of *Guy* in hand and the method in mind that here serves to check MS readings can verify himself the truth of the assertion. See above, n. 10.

⁴⁵ See also my article on Chaucer's use of the "Breton Lays of the Auchinleck MS."

⁴⁶ See above, n. 11.

⁴⁷ See above, n. 10.

for this condemnation of the parody that is more full of this romance than of any other, he borrows these two phrases straight from the Auchinleck *Guy*:

<i>Þe deuel biteche ich zou ichon!</i>	5834* ⁴⁸
<i>Þou nart nougt worþ a tord!</i>	3704

⁴⁸ It is characteristic that C omits A, 5834, and for A, 3704, has *nougt worthe a mouse tord!*

THE AUCHINLECK MANUSCRIPT AND A POSSIBLE LONDON BOOKSHOP OF 1330-1340*

FROM 1477 when Caxton, in his little Westminster shop, published the first book printed in England, the history of English book production is richly documented.¹ Even before the invention of printing, the story of monastic books, in England and elsewhere, can be fairly well traced.² A good deal is now known about the output of medieval university books.³ But there is a notable gap, even in our theorizing, about the early production of vernacular works in England, especially about the very large amount of secular verse that was composed before 1350 by anonymous authors.⁴ We know practically nothing about either the authors or the transcribers of those works, or about the circumstances under which manuscripts of contemporary date were compiled. Minstrels have been spoken of, sometimes as the

* From *PMLA*, LVII (1942), 595-627.

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¹ For a compact, expert survey of the subject see *A History of the Printed Book*, ed. by L. C. Worth, *The Dolphin*, III (The Limited Editions Club, New York, 1938); in this work special sections are devoted to English production in the different centuries. See also Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade, An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books* (London, 1939). Cf. F. A. Mumby, *Publishing and Bookselling, A History from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (New York, 1931). For Caxton see, in particular, E. G. Duff, *The Printers, Stationers and Book Binders of Westminster and London from 1476 to 1555* (Cambridge, 1906), pp. 1-23.

² For the most recent and comprehensive study of books produced or preserved in medieval monasteries see J. W. Thompson, *The Medieval Library* (Chicago, 1939) *passim*. Parts I-III are devoted to Libraries from the Early Middle Ages to the Italian Renaissance; Part IV to the Making and Care of Books in the Middle Ages.

³ For University books see the notable work of Jean Destrez, *La "Pecia" des les Manuscrits Universitaires du XIII et du XIV Siècle* (Paris, 1935) and the review by G. G. Coulton, *The Library*, 4th Ser., XVI (1936), pp. 456-461.

⁴ Cf. J. E. Wells, *A Manual of Writing in Middle English* (New Haven, 1916), p. 5, for a list of romances, *passim* for other texts produced before 1350.

authors, sometimes as the oral “publishers,” of much of this popular poetry,⁵ and the more important manuscripts have been generally attributed to monastic compilers and scribes, but in general it must be admitted, on very scanty, or on no, evidence whatsoever.⁶ Despite an enormous amount of meticulous study of individual texts, literary criticism has but rarely concerned itself with medieval English books as wholes, rather than parts; it has not had opportunity as yet to digest the new information that has recently been coming to light about English bookmen and the English book trade in the fourteenth century; and it has remained entirely apart from art criticism although the fact, long since accepted in art studies and more and more widely established, of the development of the medieval lay atelier⁷ surely

⁵ Minstrels are mentioned most frequently in connection with romances. Cf. Wells, *ibid.*, p. 1: “Most of the surviving pieces seem to have been composed by humble members of society; and some were made by minstrels or gleemen.” *Cambridge History of English Literature* (Cambridge, 1908), I, 282: “Romance writers worked for common minstrels and were not particular about their style.” W. P. Ker, *English Literature, Medieval* (London, n. d.), pp. 130-133, speaks several times of minstrels’ work. Cf., *passim*, Ruth Crosby, “Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages,” *Speculum*, XI (1936), 88-110. In a later article, *Speculum*, XIII, 430, she remarks: “Popular poetry in the Middle Ages was written to be ‘published’ by the minstrels.” Of special interest as contemporary confirmation of the fact that sometimes texts were composed for the use of minstrels, is Robert Mannyng’s statement that his own *Chronicle of England* (ca. 1338) was not made (*Anglia*, IX [1886], p. 44:

I mad noght for no disours,
Ne for no seggers, no harpours,
Bot for the luf of symple menne.

⁶ Does even the ascription of Harley 2253 rest on assured evidence? In 1841 Thomas Wright, *Early English Poetry* (Percy Society IV, vii) noted that certain local allusions and three local saint legends in this manuscript seemed to indicate an origin in Herefordshire. Because of one of these legends, *Legenda de Sancto Etfrido presbitero de Leonministra*, f. 132, he felt “inclined to conclude that the Harleian MS . . . was written by some secular clerk connected with the priory of Leominster. Perhaps he was himself a poet, and was the author of the song containing the allusion to the river Wye.” This speculative remark has gradually turned into positive assertion. Cf. Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 488: “Harley 2253 . . . copied by a scribe of Leominster Abbey, Hertfordshire (*sic*.)” The confusion in place as well as in the concept of author and scribe should be noted. Carleton Brown, *English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1932), p. xxxv, thought Wright’s suggestion very reasonable, but offered no further evidence on this point.

⁷ For the well known ateliers of Honoré, ca. 1292, of Jean Pucelle, ca. 1327, and others, see Henry Martin, *La Miniature française* (Paris, 1923), pp. 21 ff.; 92. In 1323, in his *Tractatus de Laudibus Parisius*, Jean de Jandun spoke warmly of the eager scribes, illuminators, and binders who were then at work in Paris. Cf. Le Roux de Lincy, *Paris et ses historiens* (Paris, 1867), pp. 54 ff. For the lay production of many Arthurian manuscripts, French, Italian, German, English, see R. S. and L. H. Loomis, *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (New York, London, 1938), pp. 89-139. For English lay ateliers, see below, notes 8-11.

bears on the contemporary development of lay scriptoria as well. All these are new and fruitful fields for investigation to which, for the most part, the present article can but direct attention. Its special purpose is to advance some reasons, based on a single but large and important English book dating from the first half of the fourteenth century, for the theory that it was in some such lay scriptorium that the production of this book, and probably others of the same kind took place. For convenience, this hypothetical lay center where went on, whether under one roof or not, the necessarily unified and directed work of compiling, copying, illuminating, and binding any book, is here called a book shop.

Impossible, at first thought, as it might seem to discover anything today about the ways in which anonymous medieval English verse was either composed or published, it will be readily granted that nearly all that has so far been learned about medieval book production, whether for monasteries or universities, has been slowly culled from the study of important individual manuscripts. But the plain and undistinguished looking manuscripts written in English before 1400, as wholes, have escaped such scrutiny. The Middle English specialists who have worked with them have been wholly concerned with individual texts, their sources, dialects, etc. Although there was in England, in the first half and the last quarter of the fourteenth century, as art scholars now recognize,⁸ a large production of magnificently illuminated manuscripts, for the use of wealthy ecclesiastics and nobles, the contents were invariably in Latin or French. No *de luxe* edition of even Chaucer's works, court poet though he was, seems to have appeared until after his death.⁹ Manuscripts in English were

⁸ Cf. *passim*, Eric Millar, *English Illuminations in the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (London, 1928), especially pp. ix, 11-27; Elfrida Saunders, *English Illumination* (Florence and Paris, 1928); F. Harrison, *English Manuscripts of the XIVth Century* (London and New York, 1937), etc. S. C. Cockerell and M. R. James, *Two East Anglian Psalters* (Oxford, 1926), pp. 31 ff., believed the Ormesby, the Gorleston, and Douai Psalters were probably decorated by secular artists "working for wealthy patrons outside the walls of a monastery, and filling up their time by preparing books which had no certain destination." Noting that the Ormesby Psalter must have remained in quires for a quarter of a century, James remarked: "It is more than likely that books of this kind were sometimes set on foot as a commercial speculation." Cf. D. D. Egbert, *The Psalter of Queen Isabella* (N. Y. Public Library, 1935) and the *Art Bulletin*, XVII (1936), pp. 527 ff., for an important group of early fourteenth century manuscripts which he assigns to a lay atelier of central England.

⁹ All known Chaucer manuscripts are of the fifteenth century or later. Of the

commonly not decorated at all; if they were decorated, it was with mediocre work.¹⁰ The famous Auchinleck MS, one of the earliest and largest compilations of Middle English verse, has small and perfectly commonplace miniatures and altogether trivial decorative devices. It cannot, for a moment, be put into comparison with the exquisite volume known as Queen Mary's Psalter, or with other notable works produced by fine English ateliers before 1350.¹¹ It bears no sign whatsoever of being a luxury manuscript, and today, in art criticism, it is not even mentioned. In literary criticism, despite endless editions of its single poems, it has never been studied as an entity in itself, and the nature of its origin is still wholly in doubt. Yet by every precedent of manuscripts of more learned content and more notable appearance, it is within the book itself that we can best expect to find some evidence about its origin, about the composition of at least some of its pieces, especially those that show relationship to each other, about the men who copied and illustrated them, and so helped to "publish" this large and now so treasured volume.

To speak of "publication" some one hundred and thirty or forty years before Caxton may seem confusing, but the word has

eighty-two known manuscripts, only twenty-eight have any form of decoration, and the majority of these "are of mediocre quality." Cf. Margaret Rickert's section on "Illumination" in J. M. Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (Chicago, 1940), I, 561-603. The Ellesmere MS, the most splendidly executed Chaucerian manuscript, "may well have been made in London" (*ibid.*, I, 151).

¹⁰ An outstanding example of the poor illustration given before 1400 to even the most distinguished English poetry is to be found in Cotton Nero A X, which contains the *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, *Patience*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Cf. the facsimile reproduction, EETS, 163 (1932). On the wretched miniatures for *SGGK* see Loomis, *op. cit.*, p. 138, figs. 389-391.

¹¹ Vandals have cut out all but seven of the miniatures which once headed most of the poems in the Auchinleck MS. For reproductions see R. S. Loomis, *PMLA*, XXX (1915), 521, Fig. 7 (*Richard Cœur de Lion*); Frontispiece, Maitland edition of *Beves of Hamtoun*. For comment on Queen Mary's Psalter (Royal 2 B VII) and other notable English manuscripts now ascribed to lay ateliers see above, note 8, and especially, Millar, *op. cit.*, pp. ix, 11-27. It is unfortunate that the artistic inferiority of the Auchinleck MS has not been frankly admitted. Had Miss Morrill, *Speculum Gy de Warewyke*, EETSES, LXX (1898), pp. clxxxviii, cxc, known of the better types of illumination, she could not possibly have written of "the finely wrought illuminations" or "the exquisite workmanship" of the Auchinleck MS. Mr. Bennett's recent reference, "The Author and his Public in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Essays and Studies by Members of the Eng. Assoc.*, XXIII (1938), p. 17, to "the magnificent Auchinleck MS" must be taken as showing historical enthusiasm for its venerable contents, not its artistry. I regret not having seen his valuable article until the present one was complete. I agree with most of its conclusions, but believe that many of them would apply to the first half of the fourteenth century.

long since been used in connection with medieval manuscripts,¹² and in connection with the Auchinleck MS the question of its "publisher" is of peculiar importance. For the compilation of this book, it would appear, was not the direct result of chance copying, of some dilettante patron's or family's desire to collect a miscellaneous assortment of English verse; nor can it have been the immediate result of some minstrel's desire to have a convenient repertoire at hand. Given what we now know about the prevailingly high cost of books, especially of illustrated books in the fourteenth century,¹³ no poor devil of a minstrel, it seems probable, could have afforded to buy this rather large quarto which was once extensively illustrated. A minstrel of the more settled and prosperous sort, like those paid regular and fairly good wages at the court of Edward III¹⁴ might, in truth, have owned the volume, might, perhaps, have given a general order for it, but it seems doubtful if even such a professional user of English verse could have had a more direct part in its immediate production. For whether the book was produced "on spec" as a kind of medieval publishing venture, or whether it was a "bespoke" book, as books commonly were, produced on order for some literary patron, the fact, almost entirely ignored in all extant comments on the volume, that it was copied by five scribes,¹⁵ gives a first and strong indication that it was produced by professional scribes, working in some sort of a lay bookshop.

The Auchinleck MS has always been attributed, as books produced before 1350 have commonly been attributed, to either

¹² R. K. Root, "Publication before Printing," *PMLA*, XXVIII (1915), pp. 417 ff.

¹³ H. E. Bell, "The Price of Books in Medieval England," *The Library*, XVII (1937), pp. 312-352; W. L. Schramm, "The Cost of Books in Chaucer's Time," *MLN*, XLVIII (1933), 139-145; Thompson, op. cit., ch. XX, "Paper, The Book Trade, and Book Prices."

¹⁴ Cf. C. C. Olson, "The Minstrels at the Court of Edward III," *PMLA*, LVI (1941), 601-612.

¹⁵ The five handwritings were distinguished by Kölbing in his description, still the best in print, of the whole manuscript (*Englische Studien*, VII [1884], pp. 177-191. He designated these scribes by the Greek letters, α, β, γ, δ, ε). For photographic reproductions of the writing of α, by all odds the most important scribe, see the frontispieces of the *Seven Sages of Rome* and *Amis and Amiloun* in the EETS, vols. 191 (1933) and 203 (1937). For a reproduction of the writing of δ, see the Maitland Club edition of *Beves of Hamtoun*, XLIV (1838), frontispiece. The five scribes, with practical uniformity, followed one plan throughout the book. Each page was ruled, the initial letter of each line was separated by one em from the following letters, and each of the two columns of text on every page was designed, unless space had to be left for a miniature, to have forty-four lines.

a monastic scriptorium or to a wealthy household.¹⁶ But though the oral use of English was undoubtedly familiar enough among the English aristocracy even by 1300, and though pious men, like Robert Mannyng, were here and there devoting themselves to the translation of edifying texts avowedly not for the *lered*, but for the *lewed*,¹⁷ i.e., for English laymen not able to read Latin or French, there is no known justification for assuming that, at this period, in even the most commercialized monastic scriptorium or in any great household of the day, as many as five scribes would have been contemporaneously dedicated to the copying *in English* of so large an amount of purely secular verse as this volume contains. Apart from Royalty, few, if any, of the wealthy households would have employed five scribes, and there is nothing in the book itself, as already noted, to suggest any such "luxury" origin. The five scribes, moreover, unquestionably had before them a collection of over forty English texts, both religious and secular, and though it is, of course, conceivable that such a collection existed in either a monastic or a rich private library, all the extant evidence is against such an assumption. English nobles and clerics may have willingly listened to English stories, but the known contents of their not inconsiderable libraries before 1360 indicate that, with the rare exception of a religious or didactic work in English, such collectors were concerned with the acquisition of books written in Latin or French.¹⁸ Although

¹⁶ Published conjectures about the origin and purpose of the book have been few and somewhat contradictory. In his *English Literature . . . to Chaucer* (New York, 1906), p. 14, W. H. Schofield wrote: "Sometimes, it seems, a single codex formed the whole library of a family, and was carefully cherished, slowly added to, and solemnly bequeathed from one generation to another. The so-called Auchinleck MS . . . serves admirably to illustrate what such a volume might have been." After some remarks on the Thornton MS, he continued (p. 16): "These two manuscripts seem to have been carefully prepared volumes of selected poetry for the use of readers, and not simply the written repertoires of professional reciters." For a recent comment see W. L. Renwick and H. Orton, *The Beginnings of English Literature to Skelton* (London, 1939), p. 83: "The owner of the Auchinleck MS had a wide taste both in French and English. He collected . . . a little library of mixed reading, testimony to the mixed interests of a moderately serious general reader." Early statements concerning the production of the manuscript in either "an Anglo-Norman convent" or in some "North of England monastery" were wholly conjectural. Cf. Sir Walter Scott, *Sir Tristrem* (Edinburgh, 1803), App., p. 107; W. B. Turnbull, *Legendae Catholicae* (Edinburgh, 1840), p. vi.

¹⁷ Cf. A. C. Baugh, *History of the English Language* (New York, 1935), pp. 148-151, 165-183. He quotes, p. 176, three of the numerous apologies from early fourteenth century writers for their use of English. See also note 43 below.

¹⁸ Miss Hope Allen, to whom I am indebted for several most helpful suggestions

the Auchinleck MS itself proves the production of substantial books before that date, the very number and diversity of its English texts, its plain and relatively cheap format, its worldly character, make it difficult to believe that its five scribes and other craftsmen who worked upon it, were living under either a monastic or a noble roof-tree.

In recent articles¹⁹ I have called attention to Kölbing's old but admirable description of the whole manuscript, and to certain much later conclusions about the London provenance of the two scribes by whom thirty-seven of the extant forty-four items were copied.²⁰ Because of the paleographical evidence and because the latest historical allusion in the volume is to the death of Edward II (1327) and a prayer for "our zong king," Edward III, it is clear that the book was produced between 1330 and 1340.²¹ By virtue of the London dialect of the two principal scribes and of certain important London stories, to be noted

and references in connection with this paper, remarks that a copy of the *Ancren Riwele* was given by the Countess of Clare (ca. 1280) to an aristocratic nunnery. But wills and inventories before 1370 make almost no mention of secular books in English. See below, note 24. In her examination of over 7000 wills, Miss Deansley, "Vernacular Books in England in the XIVth and XVth Centuries," *MLR*, XV (1920), 349-358, noted, among the 338 wills that bequeathed books, no secular English books before a *Pers Plowman* of 1396. She remarked, p. 349 ff., on the rarity of vernacular works as opposed to Latin, and on the long preponderance, among vernacular books, of works of piety over secular books, such as romances or chronicles. Cf. also R. W. Wilson, "More Lost Literature in Old and Middle English," *Leeds Studies in English*, V-VI (1936-37). In monastic catalogues he found few English books and those wholly of a religious or didactic nature (V, 1-35); in private libraries the earliest instance noted by him (VI, 38) of a worldly work in English was in 1387, "j livre de Englys del Forster et del Sangler," among the books of Sir Simon de Burley. Cf. also L. Hibbard, *MLN*, XXX (1915), 171.

¹⁹ "Chaucer and the Auchinleck MS: *Thopas* and *Guy of Warwick*"; "Chaucer and the Breton Lays of the Auchinleck MS." Cf. also for the manuscript and its history, W. H. Hulme, *Harrowing of Hell*, *EETSES*, 100 (1907), ix-xiv.

²⁰ The most important scribe, since he copied thirty-five texts, was α . His London origin was indicated by Karl Brunner, *The Seven Sages of Rome*, *EETS*, 191 (1933), pp. xxv ff.; also by Bertram Vogel, "The Dialect of *Sir Tristrem*," *JEGP*, XL (1941), 538-544, who believes that not only the scribe, but also the composer of this poem, were Londoners. For the Auchinleck texts copied by α , see Kölbing, *passim*, or Muriel Carr, "Notes on a Medieval Scribe," *University of Wisconsin, Studies in Language and Literature*, II (1918), p. 153, n. 2. Her complaint, p. 157, n. 10, that no one in editing these texts, referred to other texts copied by α for indications of his dialect or scribal habits, has, until very recently, remained true. The London origin of the γ scribe, who copied the couplet version of *Guy of Warwick* and the *Chronicle*, was indicated by Ewald Zettl, *An Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, *EETS*, 196 (1935), pp. cxxi ff.

²¹ Cf. Zettl, *ibid.*, p. xvi; J. M. Booker, *A Middle English Bibliography* (Heidelberg, 1912), p. 54.

later, it seems, then, that the book was probably produced in London, the place which would, indeed, have been the most natural center for whatever bookmaking was already under way in English. With its large numbers of literate "civil servants" of one kind and another concentrated in London and Westminster with a citizenry in general better educated and wealthier than in other parts of England, London was already, a modern political capital, "an economic, social and literary center."²² A natural reading public, natural buyers, existed there, if anywhere, for such a book as this, at once modest yet substantial in format, and wholly English in character. Can we help suspecting that this new public, new, that is, to the reading and buying of English texts, was beginning to be supplied by professional workers, obscure writers and illuminators gathered in little necessary groups together, in just such lay shops, though obviously of inferior quality, as those which had long since been operating on the Continent? Small lay bookshops of this kind would naturally have produced in the first half of the fourteenth century just such manuscripts as some of those which have survived, manuscripts of undistinguished workmanship, of notably secular contents, and written in the native speech, in the English of the 'increasingly vigorous "comonalte."

This concept of secular London bookshops in the first half of the fourteenth century is, however, still novel, perhaps startling. It was not, as a matter of fact, until 1935 that the possibility was strongly urged for even the second half of the century when, as everyone would admit, the status of English, as a national and literary language, was much better established. In an article on "The Text of the Canterbury Tales in 1400" (*PMLA*, L, 108), Tatlock stated the case with vigorous realism:

In Chaucer's day the time was long past when almost all book-making was in the hands of "the old monks." With the increase of a middle class, of reading in the vernacular, of production of meritorious literature in it, and the desire for literate entertainment, clerical scribes

²² T. F. Tout, "The Beginning of a Modern Capital, London and Westminster in the Fourteenth Century," *British Academy Lectures*, 1923, pp. 488 ff. His earlier article, "The English Civil Service in the Fourteenth Century," *Bull. of the John Rylands Library* (Manchester, 1916), pp. 12 ff., shows how large was the class of educated civil servants, all of whom, it may be noted, were at least possible readers of such a book as the Auchinleck MS. Such a civil servant as Chaucer may well have been one of its later buyers.

would hardly figure here; it is impossible to imagine that secular reading matter multiplied much except through secular and commercial routes. . . . No one familiar with Chaucer manuscripts doubts that they were written mostly by professionals. The probability is also that most of them were written for and sold by bookdealers.

With these conclusions, no one, I take it, would quarrel today. In the great edition of *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* by Manly and Rickert there are frequent allusions to shop-made manuscripts, and an indefatigable effort was made to record and interpret the revisions, the editings, of professional scribes, and the indications that certain manuscripts came from the same shop.²³ The eight volumes of this edition make, indeed, a kind of monument, not only to modern scholarship, but to the professional fifteenth century scribe and his workshop as well. However backward and hesitant literary criticism has been about admitting the commercial production of books in the second half of the fourteenth century and the first part of the fifteenth, it must now be admitted as a fact proved by this intensive study of the Chaucer manuscripts themselves. The chief problem is whether it can be admitted, not only for those texts and their immediate fourteenth century prototypes, but for the 1300-50 period and non-Chaucerian manuscripts as well.

In the article just quoted, Tatlock lamented, as any one, even in 1935, would have had to do, the lack of exact and comprehensive information about the book trade in England in the fifteenth century. For the preceding century there was still less. Aside from the account of his own enormous book-buying ventures by that famous early bibliophile, Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham, little was known, and the inference was almost inevitably drawn that a book trade in England at that time simply did not exist. A good deal has been said, in fact, about the supposed "booklessness" of fourteenth century England despite the very considerable evidence of known private libraries.²⁴

²³ Manly and Rickert, *op. cit.*, I, 24, 60, 72, 119, 203, 225, 423, etc. In regard to medieval bookshop production, cf. Thompson, *op. cit.*, 371: "As the burgher class became increasingly literate and intellectual more and more the making of books escaped from the cloister and found lodgment in book shops, long before the invention of printing." For this statement, however, no English evidence before 1403 was given, except for the miniature referred to below in note 25.

²⁴ Among the collections once privately owned and bequeathed as total, indi-

We are today, at long last, beginning to possess some concrete and revealing information about books and bookmen and the book trade in Chaucer's own century. The fact of the existence of professional bookmen, not merely as the sellers but also as the producers of books, has become certain. We even have a contemporary picture of an English shop! A fifteenth-century English manuscript contains the only known illustration of a medieval bookshop; it shows books arranged on two stands, and the keeper of the shop in converse with a prospective buyer.²⁵ In his *Philobiblon*, written before 1345, Richard de Bury observed, as Tatlock and others have noted, that he had known many stationers and bookmen (*stationariorum ac librariorum*) both in his own country and abroad. In the Cartulary of the University of Paris licenses as stationers were recorded between 1316 and 1350 for ten named Englishmen, to say nothing of two Irishmen and one Scot.²⁶ The fact suggests that a much larger number of Englishmen must likewise have been similarly employed in London. As the Paris tax lists of 1292 and 1313 show that even then secular scribes and illuminators were congregating in the neighborhood of the University,²⁷ it seems probable that the same sort of localization would have taken place in London too.

vidual collections, we may note the following: 1303, Bishop Richard de Gravesend of London bequeathed to St. Paul's about 100 volumes valued at over £100; 1313, Bishop Ralph Baldock of London left to St. Paul's 15 books; 1331, Prior Henry Estry left 80 books to Christ Church, Canterbury; *ca.* 1345, Abbot Michael de Mentmore left to St. Alban's books valued at £100; before 1345 Bishop Richard Aungerville of Durham planned to leave his "innumerable" books to Durham College, Oxford; 1346, the Master, William Styband, gave 10 books to Pembroke College, Cambridge; 1350, the Founder, William Bateman, gave 70 books to Trinity Hall, Cambridge; 1358, William de Ravenstone, chaplain and schoolmaster, left 84 books to St. Paul's School; 1359, Guy de Beauchamp, son of the Earl of Warwick, left 42 books, including 19 French romances, to Bordesley Abbey, Worcestershire; 1358, Queen Isabella possessed 9 books of French romance in addition to the splendid Psalter mentioned above in note 8. In view of these dates and figures, I question the usual assumption as to the general "booklessness" of fourteenth century England, even in the pre-Chaucerian period. On this supposed "booklessness" see Miss Deansley, *op. cit.*, p. 349; Samuel Moore (see below, note 30). Many of the private libraries listed above are mentioned by Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 373-413.

²⁵ This miniature was reproduced by D. Hartley and M. Elliott. *Life and Work of the People of England* (London, 1931), vol. I (*The Middle Ages*), Pl. 31. See H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the British Museum*, II, 578-80.

²⁶ Paul Delalain, *Études sur le libraire parisien du XIII^e au XV^e siècle* (Paris, 1891), p. 58 ff:

²⁷ Henry Martin, *La Miniature française*, p. 13.

Though medieval London lacked a university, still, as the largest and most commercial of all English cities, it would not only have had the largest share in the ever growing book trade in England,²⁸ but it would have been likely to localize that trade. The recent valuable study by Graham Pollard of the English "stationers" before 1557 confirms these suppositions by bringing together documented fourteenth century London names that have been unknown.²⁹ From 1311 and 1312 come the first records of a *stacionarius Londiniensis*, a certain William de Southflete, who sold parchment and bound books. Later London records concern a John de Grafton, 1353, 1366, a *parchemener* and stationer of St. Paul's Churchyard; Richard de Gloucester, 1362, a stationer; Stephen Vant, 1379, 1389, a stationer and book-binder; Thomas Rolf, an illuminator, and Richard Marleburgh, both mentioned in 1382 as stationers. As Pollard (p. 5) has pointed out, the spreading use in England of the term *stationarius* "emphasized the individual's importance as a bookdealer rather than as a craftsman," for he was not, as were other bookmen, primarily a parchminer, a scrivener, an illuminator, or a book-binder. In the thirteenth century in London "there was no customary term" for anyone like a certain Michael of Ludgate Hill, *qui vendit libros*; in the fourteenth century *stationarius*, in this specific sense, seems to have become the established term. In view of these records we no longer have an excuse for ignoring the English bookdealer in London and elsewhere. We now know

²⁸ Thompson, op. cit., p. 645: "The English book trade developed not around the Universities, as on the Continent, but in London, where the stationers formed a guild as early as 1403." Putnam, op. cit., I, p. 311: "In London there is record of an active trade in manuscripts being in existence as early as the middle of the fourteenth century." Mumby, op. cit., p. 40: "In London the scribes, or writers of the court hand and Text Letters . . . forerunners of the Stationers' Company, have been traced in the civic records to 1357, but they must have been in existence as recognized copiers and sellers of books long before then."

Cf. A. C. Piper, "The Parchment-Making Industry in Winchester and Hampshire," *The Library*, 3rd Ser., X (1919), 65-68; and "The Book Trade in Winchester," *The Library*, 3rd Ser., VII (1916), 191-197; H. Plomer, "The Importation of Books into England in the XVth and XVIth Centuries," 4th Ser., IV (1924), 146-180; IX (1928), 164-168. Though concerned with the period after 1400, Plomer's articles indicate methods of book importation that may well have been in operation before that date.

²⁹ Graham Pollard, "The Company of Stationers before 1557," *The Library*, 4th Ser., XVIII (1938), pp. 1-38. See also George Gray, *The Earlier Cambridge Stationers and Bookbinders* (Oxford Bibliographical Soc., 1904). For Oxford bookmen see E. Savage, *Old English Libraries* (London, 1912), pp. 199-205; H. Plomer, "Some Early Booksellers," *The Library*, 3rd Ser., III (1912), 412-418.

that before 1360 he was busy at his trade, and that in himself and in his shop he might combine several book crafts.³⁰

With the historical assurance, then, that the English book-dealer and book producer was an active and familiar figure even in the first half of the fourteenth century, we turn to the Auchinleck MS itself. Despite the relative scarcity of extant manuscripts in English dating from this century, this one large volume proves the vigor of English verse before 1340. Though this "edition," as so often happened with medieval books, may have been limited to but one copy, it comprised in itself a whole library; it offered a remarkably varied representation of many types and kinds of English verse. Thirteen items, as the original numbering shows, have been altogether lost from the book, but it still contains, in whole or in part, in its 334 leaves, a total of forty-four items, though one of these is a fragment illegible except for its title.³¹ There are—to be baldly enumerative—eighteen romances;³² one chronicle and a list of Norman barons;³³ two pious tales of the Miracle type;³⁴ eight legends of saints and other holy legends;³⁵ one Visit to the Otherworld;³⁶ one humorous tale;³⁷ two debates;³⁸ one homily;³⁹ two monitory pieces; ⁴⁰ three works of

³⁰ The individual crafts of the stationers named above show that most of them were actively connected with the production as well as the sale of books. In "Some Aspects of Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages," *The Library*, 3rd Series, IV (1913), 373, Samuel Moore states that "the book-trade in medieval England appears to have been a mere scrivener's trade," and that "the stationers correspond, not to the booksellers and publishers, but to the printers of our day." These ideas, in the light of later knowledge, seem as questionable as does his belief (p. 369) in the booklessness of the fourteenth century.

³¹ This fragment is *þe wenche þat loved a King* (Kölbing, No. 27). Five items, as the original numbering shows, have been lost from the beginning of the book. For convenience of reference, I have followed the classifications and titles given by Wells in his *Manual of Writings*. When his titles differ from those given by Kölbing, I have added the latter's in parenthesis together with his numbering of the successive items.

³² See below, notes 44-50.

³³ *Short Metrical Chronicle* (Kölbing, No. 40, *Liber Regum Angliae*.) The list of barons is, of course, not listed by Wells.

³⁴ *How the Psalter of Our Lady was Made* (Kölbing, No. 29, *How Our Leuedi Sauter was ferst founde*); *Clerk Who Would See The Virgin* (Kölbing, No. 9, *Miracle of the Virgin*).

³⁵ Saint legends: *Gregory, Margaret, Katherine, Mary Magdalene, Anna*. Other holy legends: *Adam and Eve, Harrowing of Hell, Assumption of the Virgin*.

³⁷ *Penniworth of White*.

³⁶ *Owayn Miles or The Purgatory of Saint Patrick*.

³⁸ *Debate between the Body and the Soul; The Thrush and the Nightingale*.

³⁹ *Speculum Gy de Warewyke* (Kölbing, No. 1, *Epistola Alcuini*).

⁴⁰ *Sayings of Saint Bernard* (Kölbing, No. 35, *Les Diz de Seint Bernard*); *Enemies of Man* (Kölbing, No. 39, *A Moral Poem*).

religious instruction;⁴¹ three of satire and complaint.⁴² The romances both in number and individual length, make up by far the largest section of the book, and fully justify the complaint, made before 1325, by the English author of the *Cursor Mundi*, as to the prevalence of romantic fiction and its all too successful competition with religious story:

Storijs of diuers thinges,
 Of princes, prelates, and of kinges, 21
 Sangys sere of diuers rime,
 Engliss, franss, and latine,
 To rede and here, ilkon is prest.⁴³

The Auchinleck romances are themselves of the most varied kind and are well designed to catch all tastes; two are of the Matter of France;⁴⁴ five of the Matter of Britain;⁴⁵ six are of English heroes;⁴⁶ four of more or less Eastern interest;⁴⁷ one famous legend blends romance with didactic intent.⁴⁸ Some are violently militant; some purely sentimental; the *King of Tars*⁴⁹

⁴¹ *Seven Sins; Pater Noster; Psalm 50* (English Bible, 51, Kölbing, No. 36, *David þe King*).

⁴² *Evil Times of Edward II* (Kölbing, No. 44, *þe Simonie*); *Praise of Women* (the classification of this poem as a satire is doubtful); *On the King's Breaking of Magna Carta* (Kölbing, No. 20, *A Satirical Poem*).

⁴³ *Cursor Mundi*, ed. R. Morris, EETS, 57 (1874), pp. 9-10. Notable, also, because of the early reference to even aristocratic interest in English tales, are the lines in the Auchinleck *Arthour and Merlin* (ed. Kölbing, Leipzig, 1890):

Mani noble ich haue yseize 25
 Þat no Freynsch coupe seye:
 Biginne ichil for her loue,
 On Inglische tel mi tale.

Of great interest also are the lines in *William of Palerne*, ed. W. W. Skeat, EETS, ES, I (1876), xi ff., which tell how one William, at the command of Humphrey de Bohun (6th) Earl of Hereford, turned the story from French into English (alliterative) verse. This version was made about 1350 and is about the only English romance which can be definitely identified as a version made on order for a noble family. The Earls of Hereford were genuine patrons of books. On the beautiful illuminated manuscripts made for their families, see M. R. James, *The Bohun Manuscripts* (Oxford, 1936).

⁴⁴ *Otuel; Roland and Vernagu*.

⁴⁵ *Degaré; Orfeo; Lai le Freine; Sir Tristrem; Arthour and Merlin*.

⁴⁶ *Guy of Warwick* in two independent stories (one in couplets, one in stanzas); *Reinbroun; Beves of Hamtoun; Horn Childe; Richard Cœur de Lion* (Kölbing, No. 43, *King Richard*).

⁴⁷ *Alisaunder; Seven Sages; Floris and Blanchefleur; King of Sars*.

⁴⁸ *Amis and Amiloun*.

⁴⁹ The various studies of Prof. Lillian Hornstein show that this romance involved the Tartar victory of 1299 at Damascus. The story could not have been known in England before 1300. Cf. *Speculum*, XVI (1941), 404-414; *MLN*, LV (1940), 355; *MLR*, XXXVI (1941), 442.

is as excessively pietistic as the *Seven Sages* is cynical. In length they vary from the charming brevity of a translation of one of Marie de France's short lays to the ponderous bulk in 10995 lines of the two versions of *Guy of Warwick* or the 9938 lines of *Arthur and Merlin*. In form most of the stories are in the familiar short riming couplet, but there are six romances in the twelve-line tail-rime stanza and the manuscript has, for this reason, been termed "the fountain head" of the style.⁵⁰ The scope and variety of the Auchinleck romances, in form and content, is shown by even so brief a summary. Since these romances can most aptly demonstrate the ways in which some of them were made, and also illustrate the editorial planning that went into them, I shall not attempt to say more here of the book as a whole, but keep simply to a few of these pertinently revealing texts.

Before taking them up individually, however, it is helpful to reflect on the consensus of critical opinion in regard to the immediate origins of the English metrical romances as this was expressed in 1916 by Professor Wells:

Practically all the extant versions are based on French originals. Usually the English author follows only one source, but in some instances apparently several earlier works have been drawn upon. . . . *Commonly the English pieces, as they have come to us, were composed with the originals before the writer's eyes; but in some cases, and perhaps more frequently than is supposed, they were made from memory, perhaps from recitation. . . . The authors invented little; they abridged and condensed freely.*⁵¹

For all but five romances (*Orfeo, Degaré, Otuel, Horn Childe* and the *King of Tars*) in the Auchinleck MS, we have still extant French texts. Though no one of these texts may be the precise original from which the English translators made their versions, it must have been on French texts close to these that they worked; by these they meant the source *book* or *geste* to which they not infrequently referred. These Auchinleck romances were copied from the *texts* of translators, of workers with *texts*, not with tradition or invention. The "authors" were in no wise original poets,

⁵⁰ A. M. Trowce, "The English Tail-Rhyme Romances," *Medium Ævum*, V (1932), 94. The six romances are: *The King of Tars; Amis and Amiloun*; the stanzaic *Guy of Warwick; Reinbroun; Roland and Vernagu; Horn Childe*.

⁵¹ Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 1. The italics are mine.

and did not, as it is generally admitted, achieve distinction of style, though a few poems, like *Orfeo*, have genuine charm. With the exception of this and a few others, most people would agree that these English romances are thoroughly conventionalized and pedestrian in style. They must be put down to the authorship of men of generally humble literary attainments, of no literary ambition, and nearly all of whom were possessed of the same "patter" of well-worn clichés, the same stereotyped formulas of expression, the same stock phrases, the same stock rimes, which Chaucer was to parody in such masterly fashion in *Sir Thopas*.⁵²

With these accepted generalizations in mind concerning the French textual sources, the conventionalized style, the obvious limitations as "authors" of our earliest versifiers of English romance, we are forced to admit that, to a surprising extent, the whole matter builds up into a consistent picture. If these, for the most part, unoriginal and ungifted translator-versifiers were not what we should call literary hacks, what were they? In days when all writing in English was still, like Robert Mannyng of Brunne's, avowedly for the *lewed*, could we doubt, even if we did not have their own uncourtly style to inform us, what was the social and cultural level of the obscure Englishmen who were turning out the texts of these early popular romances? The generally inferior social status of the professional minstrel who sometimes orally "published" these texts abroad, and for whose purposes they were sometimes compiled, has long been determined, but what of the hack writer who composed the texts?⁵³ Was not he, too, in some sort, a professional, making as much of a business or profession of the matter of translating and condensing, of making a new English text out of an old one in

⁵² Cf. W. F. Bryan and G. Dempster, *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (Chicago, 1941), pp. 486-559. For collections of conventional phrases, etc., in the romances, see *ibid.*, p. 491, n. 5. As Trounce, p. 90, pointed out, Chaucer was not parodying late "decadent romance," but just such examples as are found in the Auchinleck MS. As a matter of fact three of the seven poems derisively named by the poet, are found there, *Beves of Hamtoun*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Horn Childe*. On Chaucer's probable use of this very manuscript, see the articles referred to above, note 19.

⁵³ So far as I know, Clark Slover, "Sir Degare, A Study of a Medieval Hack Writer's Methods," *University of Texas Bulletin, Studies in English*, XI (1931), 5-23, was the first boldly to use this term with reference to one of these English romancers. One may agree with G. P. Faust, *Sir Degare* (Princeton, 1935), and with Miss Carr in her review of Faust's study, *MLN*, LIII (1938), p. 154, that the author was less stupid than Slover made out, without in the least escaping from the fact that this English "author" was after all just what Slover termed him.

French, as the professional scribe did in copying, or the minstrel in spreading it abroad? The minstrel may, of course, have sometimes been identical with the hack translator and versifier, but in so far as he became a maker and user of texts, it is evident that he ceased his characteristic oral function. He became then simply a writing man, indistinguishable from any other. Did the humble versifier in Middle English work always in isolation, turning out a text now here, now there, or did he sometimes work with other men like himself? To answer this question we must turn to the comparison of certain special texts in the Auchinleck MS.

THE STANZAIC *GUY OF WARWICK* AND *REINBROUN*

As one of the clearest cases showing that these obscure English versifiers sometimes worked in conjunction with each other and under some sort of supervision, we may, first of all, consider these two romances. The unique stanzaic version of *Guy of Warwick* (henceforth to be called *Guy, A²*) begins in our manuscript on f. 146 verso. Two introductory stanzas summarize the fame and early exploits of the hero. In the second stanza reference is made to Guy's return to England and to his feat of killing there, for love of King Athelston, a mighty dragon, an event which had just been recorded in the preceding couplet version (henceforth to be called *Guy, A¹*) in lines 7127-7306.⁵⁴ The author of these two stanzas obviously knew the antecedent text and fashioned his own lines to serve as an introduction to his own apparently new romance, since it was in entirely different verse form. But in reality he continued the story from the precise point at which the couplet version stopped. Whatever the reason for the break or change, there can be no question but that he fitted his stanzas to the preceding Auchinleck text. Chance could not possibly account

⁵⁴ For the stanzaic version (299 twelve-line, tail-rime stanzas) *Guy, A²*, see J. Zupitza, EETS, ES, 48 (1887) and 59 (1891), pp. 384-674, continuous pagination. For the couplet version, *Guy, A¹*, see Zupitza, EETS, ES, 42 and 49. In this last volume the couplet version ends on p. 384, line 7306. In the Auchinleck MS it fills fol. 107v-146v. By other writers these two versions have sometimes been termed A and B respectively. To those who might believe that the change of verse form indicates a change of source, I would recall Kölbing's remarks, *Beves of Hamtoun*, EETS, ES, 46 (1885), p. xi, on the shifts in metre and rime in four Auchinleck romances, *Beves, Guy, Roland and Vernagu*, and *Richard Cœur de Lion*. In the last, the shift occurs after the first two 12-line, tail-rime stanzas. "The reason for these changes is altogether unknown. . . . There is nothing to correspond to these changes in the original French versions."

for such exact dove-tailing, and no other manuscript in French or English, it is important to note, gives the slightest sign of break or change at this point.⁵⁵ It was not in the least, let us observe, a natural break in the story, for Guy's return to England was wholly motivated by love for his lady, Felice, and he had not, at the end of the dragon story, even seen the lady! In opposition, then, to the whole extant manuscript tradition and to the nature of the story itself, the stanzaic *Guy* here starts in as a new romance. But even though it is, in this procedure and in its verse form, as unique as the Auchinleck copy, is there any reason, apart from the first two stanzas, for believing that this whole version was also originally contrived for the Auchinleck MS?

The stanzaic *Guy*, taken in connection with its sequel, the stanzaic *Reinbroun*, again reveals, in this one manuscript, a deliberate manipulation of source material. Again, in every other known manuscript, in French or in Middle English, in which is found any account of Guy's son, Reinbroun, who was stolen as a child and sold in the East, who was hunted for far and near by Heraud (Heralt), his father's faithful friend,—all this and much more concerning Reinbroun's later history,—is in part embodied in Guy's own story, and in part is continued after Guy's death. The fact can most readily be observed in print in Professor Ewert's recent edition of the Old French *Gui de Warewic*, where the Reinbroun-Heralt material fills lines 8987-9370 and 11657-12926; in Zupitza's editions of two Middle English versions in couplets; and in Copland's edition (n.d.) of the old verse romance.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Twelve French manuscripts, three of them fragments, are listed by A. Ewert, *Gui de Warewic* (Paris, 1933), pp. ix ff. In this edition, line 7409 corresponds to the beginning of the English stanzaic version. Eleven English manuscripts, four of them fragments, are listed by Max Weyrauch, *Die mitttelenglischen Fassungen der Sage von Guy of Warwick u. ihre altfranzösische Vorlage* (Breslau, 1901). For the stanzaic *Guy*, A2, see Weyrauch, pp. 11-12, 55-59, 91; also important study by Wilhelm Möller, *Untersuchungen über Dialekt u. Still des me. Guy of Warwick in der Auch. Handschrift u. über das Verhältnis des strophischen Teiles des Guy zu der me. Romanze Amis and Amiloun* (Königsberg i. Pr., 1917), p. 4 ff.

⁵⁶ Cf. Ewert, op. cit., pp. 69, 80, 150-188, for the French version. Two English couplet visions appear in the two fifteenth century manuscripts of Cambridge University, Caius 107 and Univ. Libr., Ff. 2, 38. The Reinbroun-Heraud material appears in Caius 107 (ed. Zupitza, EETS, ES, 42, 48, 59, lines 8666-9029), a text which ends with the death of Guy at line 11095; and in Ff. 2, 38 (ed. Zupitza, EETS, ES 25-26 [1875-76], the same material fills lines 8409-8744 and lines 10786-11976. In Copland's edition of the old romance (ed. G. Schleich, *Palaestra*, 139 [1923], it fills lines 6643-6747 and 7492-7976. Other texts of the English romance are too late or too fragmentary to offer significant evidence on this point. In the

Hou <i>he</i> hadde euer ben strong <i>werrour</i> . . .	<i>He</i> was a <i>werrour</i> swiþe gret,
In þe world <i>was</i> non <i>his</i> <i>pere</i> .	þar <i>nas</i> nowhar <i>his</i> <i>per</i> . . .
256(12)	
<i>Mani</i> man <i>he</i> hadde slayn wiþ wrong.	<i>Mani</i> batayle <i>he</i> be-gan (7)
21(10)	
'Leman,' seyð Gij ogain,	24(1)
'Ac for þi <i>loue</i> ich haue al wrougt;	<i>For</i> þe <i>loue</i> of o wimman þat was him lef and dere,
25(7)	
Wiþ a knaue child þou art y-corn,	<i>Siþe</i> Reynbroun on hire he wan,
31(2)	
þat <i>douhti</i> beþ of dede . . .	þat was a swiþe <i>dougti</i> man,
<i>As</i> ze may forþeward here,	<i>Ase</i> ze may forþward here.
16(12)	
<i>As</i> yee may forward here.	19(12)

The second stanza of *Reinbroun* is obviously a simple though free condensation of lines on the same subject in the stanzaic *Guy*. But despite its brevity, this one stanza in *Reinbroun* keeps sixteen words that also appear in the lines quoted from *Guy*, *A*² and of these familiar words, *werrour*, *was his per*, *dougti*, and the concluding line, *Ase ze may forþward here*, used in precisely the same context as in *Guy*, *A*² are found in the corresponding lines of no other English text of *Guy of Warwick*. The verbal indebtedness of the Auchinleck *Reinbroun* to the Auchinleck *Guy* in this one stanza is plain; as plain as the more important fact, already indicated, that the former romance exists in this one manuscript only by virtue of the deliberate segregation of material elsewhere always scattered through the story of Reinbroun's more illustrious father. The two stanzaic romances show a planned relation in the Auchinleck MS that is as simple as it is unique. The director or editor wished to get the effect of two English romances—of three really, if the preceding couplet version be also taken into account—where his French source, like all known French and English manuscripts, offered but one continuous story. To one stanzaic translator the Auchinleck editor evidently gave all the text about *Guy* from his wedding to his death; to another translator he gave all that related to Reinbroun. Since this arrangement, as has been said, exists nowhere else among the many French and English manuscripts containing the story (manuscripts which are said,

for the French, to be mutually independent of each other and which, in English, preserve four different versions),⁵⁸ we are surely justified in concluding that this special arrangement, as well as the stanzaic verse into which the two poems were cast, were exclusive novelties of the one and only manuscript in which they appear. Unless we ignore in this matter, as also in that of the arrangement of *Guy*, *A*², the unified, opposing evidence of the whole manuscript tradition of the story, we cannot deny *the uniqueness in plan, no less than in form, of these linked Auchinleck romances*. They seem then to have been made in conjunction with each other; they would seem to have been supervised by the man responsible for planning the content and arrangement of the whole volume.

Objections to this theory will, of course, occur to readers, especially to those who are inclined to credit variations of all kinds to lost sources. Was not the abrupt ending of the couplet *Guy* due to a defective text which forced the use of another version? Does not the change from the couplet to stanza-form itself here indicate a change of source? These and other questions about possibilities are best met, perhaps, by questions about probabilities. If these lost versions were complete texts, do not the selections, as uniquely presented in the Auchinleck MS, prove editorial selection and rearrangement of material for the scribes to copy? If they were partial versions, already approximating the Auchinleck texts, is it really probable that three lost independent texts ever existed which, when they came to the Auchinleck scribes, produced so neat, so exact, a sequence? Are lost versions, in this instance, as probable as it is that the two unique stanzaic versions were really unique, not by the accidental chance of survival, but by virtue of having been made for the Auchinleck MS and copied there alone? Medieval English translators, humble as they were, and excessively poor as were all means of communication, can have known but rarely of each other's work. When texts "click," as they do here, is not the simplest answer best? Must not the authors have been *in felawescipe* together?

⁵⁸ "Tous ces manuscrits [i.e., of the French *Gui de Warewic*] présentent des lacunes et des fautes qui montrent qu'ils ne peuvent provenir l'un de l'autre." (Ewert, *Gui de Warewic*, p. xv). On the four different versions represented by the English manuscripts see Möller, pp. 2 ff., or Zupitza, EETS, ES, 25, pp. v-vii.

Though the stanzaic *Guy* and its sequel *Reinbroun* thus reveal "a planned economy" and the second romance even betrays at its beginning specific verbal indebtedness to the other, a far more impressive instance of extensive textual borrowing can be shown through comparison of this same stanzaic *Guy* with the romance of *Amis and Amiloun*, of which, likewise, the earliest known English text is found in the Auchinleck MS. The fact of the borrowing in *Amis, A*, as we may henceforth call this text, has long been known, but its true significance for the volume itself and its makers has been wholly overlooked. As far back as 1886 Kölbing⁵⁹ called attention to a number of close verbal parallels. Subsequently a good deal of ink was spilled over the futile question whether these parallels did or did not indicate identity of authorship. In 1917 Wilhelm Möller,⁶⁰ to whose work allusion has already been made, undertook a comprehensive investigation. Though he did not think these two romances were by the same author,⁶¹ still, by setting forth some 595 lines in which *Amis, A*, parallels the phraseology of *Guy, A*², Dr. Möller established beyond all possibility of doubt the extensive indebtedness of the one poem to the other. I have nothing of importance to add to his results, except by way of interpretation, but as his dissertation is not readily available and as readers of the present inquiry must have a sufficient basis for judgment, I have excerpted certain of his examples, somewhat amplified them, and added, for comparative purposes, selections from the Old French *Gui de Warewic*, from an older and better manuscript than the Wolfenbüttel MS used by Dr. Möller. For it is essential, as he observed,⁶² to show, first, that the text of *Guy, A*², is a more or less faithful rendering of *Gui de Warewic*; second, that in the Old French *Amis e Amilun* there is little or nothing to account for a large number of lines in the English version; and, finally, that these very lines in *Amis and Amiloun* are those most closely paralleling the text in *Guy, A*². The conclusion seems inescapable that the author of this last romance simply followed his French source, whereas the

⁵⁹ *Englische Studien*, IX (1886), 477 ff.

⁶⁰ Möller, op. cit., pp. 47-105. See above, note 55, for complete title.

⁶¹ Möller, p. 47. He accepted the conclusion of earlier studies as to the north-east Midland origin of *Amis and Amiloun*. In his opinion, p. 34, the stanzaic *Guy* came from the south-east Midland.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

author of *Amis, A*, whatever French text he used as the basis of his version, continuously combined it with borrowings from the stanzaic *Guy*.

Any group of lines would do to illustrate the first point, but I have chosen the description of Guy's wedding feast, since this is the longest continuous passage which we can later trace in *Amis, A*. Even if the English versifier of *Guy, A²*, never saw the particular manuscript (E, Additional 38662) from which the French text is quoted, it is evident from the number of words of direct translation, here italicized, that this manuscript must have been very close to the Englishman's source. Here, as well as elsewhere throughout the whole romance, is shown the truth of Professor Ewert's observation: "Les poètes anglais se sont . . . contentés en premier lieu de traduire à peu près littéralement le poème français,"⁶³

SELECTION II

GUI DE WAREWIC

GUY OF WARWICK, A²

<i>Quant li termes esteit venu</i> 7533	<i>When þe time was comen</i>
<i>Si grant barnage asemblé fu,</i>	to þende . . . 15(4)
<i>Des ducs, de cuntés e de baruns,</i>	<i>Miche semly folk was gadred</i>
<i>Qui as noeces furnt somuns.</i>	þare 15(7)
<i>La pucele ert richement apresté,</i>	<i>Of erls, barouns lasse & mare, . . .</i>
	<i>þan spoused Sir Gij þat day</i>
	15(10)
<i>A grant honor l'ad Gui esposé.</i>	<i>Fair Felice, þat miri may. . . .</i>
	14(5)
<i>Les noeces puis tenues unt,</i>	<i>þe bridal hold wiþ gamen & gle</i>
<i>Quatre jurz grant joie funt:</i> 7540	<i>Wiþ ioie & gret vigour, . . .</i> 15(11)
<i>Assez i out des menestrers,</i>	<i>þer was mirþe & melody</i> 16(10)
	<i>And al maner menstracie . . .</i>
	<i>þer was trumpes & tabour,</i> 17(1)
<i>Bons arpeurs e vielurs,</i>	<i>Fifel, croude, & harpour, . . .</i>
<i>Roturs, gigurs e tympanurs. . . .</i>	<i>Minstrels of mouþe, & mani</i>
7543	<i>dysour, . . .</i> 17(5)
<i>Chevalers povres e prisuns,</i> 7547	
<i>Qui i receivent riches duns, . . .</i>	<i>þer war giftes for þe nones,</i> 16(7)
<i>D'or e d'argent a grant plenté</i>	<i>Gold, & silver & precious stones,</i>
7550	<i>& druries riche & dere.</i>

⁶³ Ewert, op. cit., I, viii.

Des robes e des riches dras, . . .	<i>On þe fiften day ful ȝare</i>	18 (7)
<i>Al quint jur sunt departiz,</i> 7553	<i>Þai toke her leue for to fare, . . .</i>	
Ralez sunt en lur pais.	<i>Þan hadde Gij, þat gentil knigt,</i>	
Ore ad Gui tut sun pleisir, 7555		18(10)
Quant de s'amie <i>ad sun desir;</i>	<i>Feliis to his wil day & nigt. . . .</i>	
<i>Ensemble furent cinquante jurz,</i>	<i>Fiften days wiþ honour</i>	19(5)
Plus ne durerent lur amurs.	<i>Wiþ ioie togider þai were.</i>	
<i>Il avint qu'en la premere nuit,...</i>	<i>So it befel þat first nigt</i>	
<i>Ke Gui après sa femme jut,</i> 7561	<i>Þat he neyzed þat swete wiȝt</i>	
E ele <i>un enfant</i> de li conceut.	<i>A child þei geten y-fere.</i>	

Short as it is, Selection II sufficiently demonstrates the general fidelity with which, allowing for the difficulty of translating French couplets into twelve-line, tail-rime stanzas, the English versifier followed the Old French romance. Specific numbers differ, there are omissions and various small changes, but the essential relation is plain. No other Middle English manuscript, with the single exception of Sloane 1044, approaches the fullness with which the unique stanzaic version reports this wedding feast.⁶⁴ It is clear that for the author of the stanzaic *Guy* both his story and much of his phraseology were predetermined by the French *Gui de Warewic*.

Selection III presents this same stanzaic passage, only more completely, and also a few later lines, likewise dealing with festival occasions, in order to compare them with parallel passages in *Amis, A*. In accordance with Dr. Möller's second requirement, however, the fact must be stressed that not one of these passages in *Amis, A*, has any significant verbal connection with the Anglo-Norman poem, *Amis e Amilun*.⁶⁵ The French text does, indeed, suggest occasions for the three festivals described in the English version, but in each instance the English author seems to have elaborated his description to suit himself and chiefly, it would seem, by direct borrowing from *Guy, A*². To

⁶⁴ Sloane MS 1044, ed. Zupitza, *Sitzungsberichte der Kais. Wiener Akad. der Wissenschaft*, ph.-hist. Klasse, LXIV (1873), pp. 624 ff. This late fourteenth century fragment of 216 lines devotes 24 lines (174-198) to the wedding; Caius 107 gives eight lines, 7381 ff.; Ff. 2, 38, gives sixteen lines (7091 ff.). Cf. Zupitza's edition as cited above in note 54. Copland's edition (*Palaestra*, CXXXIX) gives eight lines (6061 ff.) to the wedding.

⁶⁵ *Amis e Amilun*, ed. by E. Kölbing in *Amis and Amiloun* (Heilbronn, 1884), pp. 111-187. All quotations from the French *Amis* are from this edition.

the description of the ducal feast when Amis and Amilun first came to court, the French poet gave just one line: "E hautement lur feste tint," 38. To this the English versifier devoted twenty-four lines (61-72, 97-108); of these *nine and a half were identical* with lines found in the description of Guy's wedding feast. Of the second ducal feast, held after Amis's quarrel with the Jealous Steward, the French romancer wrote as follows:

Un jur par aventure avint 205
Ke li quens une *feste* tint,
Par un jor de l'Ascension,
La out assemble meint *baron*.

The only significant words common to these lines and those quoted below from *Amis, A* (lines 409-417), lines which describe the same festival occasion, are *feste* and *baron*. To a third festival, that of the wedding of the supposed Amis to his love, the French romance devoted ten lines of description (695-705), but this passage, like the other, has again in common with the nine lines of the English version (1513-21) only two words, those for barons and for the wedding.

Since it thus appears that for descriptions of festivals *Amis, A*, owed little more than a hint for each occasion to its French predecessor, we may turn to *Guy, A²* to observe precisely what was borrowed from it for *Amis, A*. In Selection III thirty-four lines from *Guy, A²*, and thirty-eight lines from *Amis, A*, are printed in parallel columns. Identical or almost identical lines are starred. Words common to both texts are italicized. With two exceptions only [*Amis, A*, 1510-11, and *Guy, A²*, 20(3)], the lines from each romance are printed in their regular order and thus reveal since they are taken from different sections of the two romances, how continuously the parallels follow each other, parallels, it should be noted, which in almost every instance consist, not of single lines, but of groups of two, three or more lines. It is *the continuity of these successive groups of parallel passages* which eliminates the possibility of considering them merely conventional similarities. They can be accounted for only as direct and specific textual borrowings.

In order to illustrate not only the continuous borrowing in *Amis, A*, from *Guy, A²*, but also to establish the hitherto unnoted

fact that these borrowings must also have appeared in the original version of the English romance of *Amis and Amiloun*, and not merely in the Auchinleck copy, I have given for the test lines quoted from *Amis*, *A*, the variants from the three other known English manuscripts, i.e., from (S), the late fourteenth century manuscript, Egerton 2862; and the two fifteenth century texts, (H), Harleian 2386 and (D), Douce 325. In his edition of the poem for the Early English Text Society Professor Leach⁶⁶ has indicated the relations of these manuscripts to each other with scrupulous care; he has agreed with Kölbing that all four texts, though independent of each other, ultimately derive from the same English redaction (Z). The variants for the lines quoted in Selection III, here reproduced by Professor Leach's kind permission, like the variants for the text as a whole, illustrate the truth of his own observation (p. xcv, n.), that "not one instance occurs in which SD or DH preserves a really significant unique reading." Though no reference is made, even in this recent edition, to Dr. Möller's work, the variants for our selected lines, or for that matter for any of the hundreds of lines listed by the latter, offer the best possible proof that the lines imitated from the stanzaic *Guy* must have appeared in the original English version of *Amis and Amiloun*. Despite the multitude of small differences in wording and order between the four English texts of this romance, they make no essential change, in the imitative lines, of meaning or of the phrases or the actual rime patterns found in *Guy*, *A*². Except for a very rare chance omission in one or two of the manuscripts of *Amis*, the imitative lines appear in all the texts. No matter how many of these lines be dismissed singly as inevitable recurrences in a poem having a highly conventionalized phraseology and verse form, these successive groups of lines related to *Guy*, *A*², by sequences of linked phrases and linked rimes, remain absolutely unparalleled. Beyond question, on the evidence of the *Amis* manuscripts, all these riming sequences were incorporated in the original English version of this romance.

⁶⁶ *Amis and Amiloun*, ed. by MacEdward Leach, EETS 203 (1937). Leach, pp. xciv-xcvii, found that MSS SD, both derived from a common ancestor, preserve a common reading in 179 instances; MSS AH in 140 instances. These last two manuscripts seem to have been independently derived from Z, the lost original of all four English texts. Leach's conclusions were essentially in accord with those of Kölbing in his edition of the poem, p. xii.

SELECTION III

GUY OF WARWICK, A²

AMIS AND AMILOUN 67

st. 15

Perl Rouhaud as swiþe dede
sende (1)

After lordinges fer & hende

þat pris wel told in tour, . . .

*Wip mirþe & michel anour.

(6)

*Miche semly folk was gadred
þare

*Of erls, barouns lasse & mare,

& leuedis brigþ in bour.

þan spoused sir Gij þat day

Fair Felice, þat miri may,

Wip ioie & gret vigour.

st. 16

When he hadde spoused þat
swete wigt (1)

(Cf. st. 55(1) below)

(Cf. st. 17(12) below)

þe feste lasted a fourten-
nigt, . . .

Wip erl, baroun, & mani a

knigt (4)

(Cf. 17 (6) below)

*þer was mirþe & melody, (10)

*And al maner menstracie

st. 17

*Her craftes for to kiþe, . . . (3)

*To glad þo bernes bliþe . . . (6)

*As ze may list & liþe. (12)

st. 18

*On þe fiften day ful zare (7)

*þai toke her leue for to fare,

& þonked hem her gode dede.

st. 6

(A duk was) lord of þat lond,
62

(Prys in tou)n & tour;

(Frely he let) sende his sonde,

(After erles, barouns), fre &
bond,

*(And ladies bryg)t in bour; . . .

*(Wip myrþ and g)ret honour.

72

(Cf. ll. 415-17 below)

st. 124

& seþþen wip ioie opon a day
1510

He spoused Belisent, þat may

st. 125

When he hadde spoused þat
flour 1515

st. 9

þat riche douke his fest gan
hold 97

Wip erles & wip barouns bold,

*As ze may listen & liþe,

Fourtennigt, as me was told,

Wip erles & wip barouns bold,

*To glad þe bernes bliþe;

*þer was mirþe & melody

*& al maner of menstracie

*Her craftes for to kiþe. 105

*Opon þe fiftenday ful zare 106

*þai token her leue forto fare

& þonked him mani a siþe.

⁶⁷ Leach reproduces MS S to line 98, and MS A from there on. Despite their

st. 55

{ So it bifel þat *riche* Soudan
 Made a fest of *mani* a man, . . .
 Þe þridde day of þat *fest*
 Pat was so *riche* & so *honest*
 (Cf. st. 15(7-9) above)

st. 35

{ So in a time, as we tel in gest,
 409
 Þe *riche* douke lete *make* a
fest . . .
 Þer was *mani* a gentil gest 412
 Wiþ mete & drink ful *onest* . . .
 **Miche* *semly* folk was *sammed*
þare, 415
 **Erls*, *barouns*, *lasse* & *mare*,
 & *leuedis* *proude* in *pride*.

st. 189

{ *Al* þe folk in þat cite was, (1)
 **Litel* & *michel*, *more* & *las*,
 st. 270
 Bliþe were þe Inglis men
 ichon: (1)
Pai toke sir Gij þat *tide*, (3)
 & *ladde* him to Winchester
toun
 **Wiþ* wel fair *processioun*
 Ouer al *bi* *ich* a *side* . . .
 No lenger he *nold* *abide*. (11)

(Cf. st. 15(6) above)

**As* prince *proude* in *pride*
 20(3)

st. 113

{ *Alle* þe lordinges þat þer were
 1369
 **Litel* & *michel*, *lasse* & *mare*
 Ful glad þai were þat *tide* . . .
 For noþing þai *nold* *abide*;
 1374
 Þai com ogaines him out of
toun
 **Wiþ* a fair *processioun*⁶⁸
Semliche *bi* *ich* a *side*.
 Anon þai *ladde* him to þe tour
 1378
 **Wiþ* ioie & ful *michel* honour,
 **As* prince *proude* in *pride*.

fragmentary condition, lines 62-72 are here given from the A text with lost words supplied in parenthesis from S. With the exception of line 101, all the rest is the same as in Leach's edition. To his variants I have added, for the sake of emphatic comparison, brief references to *Guy*, A². In order to indicate the relationship of stanzas in the two romances, I have supplied stanza numbers for *Amis*.

⁶⁸ Of particular interest for this *toun*: *processioun* couplet is Zielke's list in his edition of *Orfeo* (Breslau, 1890, p. 16) of similar instances in seven romances. But only the stanzaic *Guy* and *Amis* alike combine in one stanza this familiar couplet with three other lines of similar context and the same rime words, *tide*, *side*, *pride*, *abide*. We could hardly ask a more convincing illustration of textual borrowing, or one that more clearly emphasizes the difference between specific borrowing and the mere recurrence of a conventional couplet.

62. douty duke D. was lorde off H. wonyd in SD.
63. And prins of H. towne & tour H. town D. toun and toure S. Cf. *Guy*, 15(3).
64. Frely: For D. sende: *om.* S. sonde: honde S.
65. erle baroun H; erles: *om.* D.
66. boure SDH.
72. merþe & moche H; and: of S. gret: grete S. Cf. also *Amis*, 1379; *Guy*, 15(6).
1510. And afterward vppon a day SD. Cf. *Guy*, 15(9, 11).
1511. feire may S. Cf. *Guy*, 15(11).
1515. *The stanza containing this line is omitted in SD.* Cf. *Guy*, 16(1).
97. þat: þe SDH. Cf. *Guy*, 53(1), þat riche.
98. Wiþ: Of SDH. wiþ: of S; *om.* DH.
100. A fourtenyzt SH. me was: men DS; men me H.
101. *The A scribe in obvious error repeats here line 98.* With meet drynke, meryst on mold S. meryst: & myrth D. meryest H. on: yn H.
102. gestes S; barouns D. þere þay were all blythe H. Cf. *Guy*, 17(6).
103. mirþe &: gamen and blee with melody S; game & HD. Cf. *Guy* 16(10).
104. ·&: Off D; Of H; With S. of: *om.* DH. mynstralycy SDH Cf. *Guy*, 16(11).
105. craftes: gestys H. kipe: kepe D. Cf. *Guy*, st. 17(3).
106. Opon: Tyl SDH. fygtene S; xv D; sexte H. Cf. *Guy*, 18(7).
107. her: *om.* SDH. forto: and wolde D.
108. þankyð SHD. Cf. *Guy*, 18(9). a: *om.* SHD.
409. So: *om.* SH; ANd D. Cf. *Guy*, 53 (1). a: þat DH. tel: rede SD; talkyn H. ieste D. Cf. *Guy*, 18(12), 279(3), In gest also we rede.
410. held S; made D; ded make H.
412. *This line stands after 413 in SDH.* And ther D. a gentil: a ryche SDH.
413. þei were honest D. Wiþ metes & drynkes of gret honest H.
415. Mony fressh folk S; Moche folk DH. Cf. *Guy*, 15(7). were com S; were serued DH.
416. Of erls SH; with erles D.
417. And ladies D. S omits this line. Cf. *Guy*, 20(5), As prince proude in pride.
1369. And all D, Cf. *Guy*, 189(1). lordes S. were SD.

1370. &: *om.* S. lesse D. mere S.

1371. Ful . . . were: Thanked god SD. Cf. *Guy*, 270(1).

1374. No lenger wil (wold D) he abyde SD.

1375. Pey ledde (lad D) him into þe toun SD.

1377. And went (And song S) by euery syde SD. Cf. *Guy*, 270(6) bi iche a side.

1378. And after had him into the toure D; And swiþ þei lad him into þe tour S.

1379. & ful michel: & grete S; and moche D. Cf. *Guy*, 15(6).

1380. As lord and princes (prynces) in prede SD. Cf. *Guy*, 20(5).

Even on the basis of the thirty-eight lines quoted above, the essential fact is apparent that a substantial number of lines from the stanzaic *Guy* reappear in *Amis*, *A*. Their number, order, grouping, make it impossible to ascribe them to anything but direct textual borrowing. Groups of two to three lines from the same stanza (st. 15) in *Guy*, *A*², are found in three stanzas of *Amis* (st. 6, 35, 124); groups of lines from 16-18, successive stanzas in *Guy*, *A*², are united to form one stanza (st. 9) in *Amis*, *A*; lines from two related stanzas in *Guy*, *A*² (st. 189, 280) again form one stanza (st. 113) in *Amis*. The fourteen starred lines are practically identical in the two texts,⁶⁹ and all fourteen occur in borrowed *groups* of lines that have the same rimes, the same phrasal patterns, as those found in *Guy*, *A*². In all there are *seventeen* of these stanzas in *Amis*, *A*, that are thus linked to *Guy*, *A*², by groups of *three, four, or even five lines*.⁷⁰ Our thirty-eight lines,

⁶⁹ In Möller's complete list of parallels, seventy-two lines are either wholly identical or differ at most in one or two words.

⁷⁰ The seventeen stanzas may be grouped as follows:

A. Stanzas having the same three rimes:

tour, anour, bour—*Guy*, *A*², st. 15; *Amis*, ll. 63 ff.

kiþe, bliþe, liþe—*Guy*, *A*², st. 17; *Amis*, ll. 99 ff.

honour, tour, flour—*Guy*, *A*², st. 19; *Amis*, ll. 463 ff.

pride, ride, hide—*Guy*, *A*², st. 20; *Amis*, ll. 495. Same order.

corn, biforn, born—*Guy*, *A*², st. 164; *Amis*, ll. 1431 ff. Same order.

born, -lorn, biforn—*Guy*, *A*², st. 22; *Amis*, ll. 2137 ff.

man-kinne, blinne, winne—*Guy*, *A*², st. 6; *Amis*, ll. 2250 ff.

B. Stanzas having the same four rimes:

ogain, sain, fayn, tvain—*Guy*, *A*², st. 9; *Amis*, ll. 121 ff. Same order.

wigt, fourtennigt, kniȝ, briȝt—*Guy*, *A*², st. 16; *Amis*, ll. 433 ff.

fong, hong, wrong, strong—*Guy*, *A*², st. 111; *Amis*, ll. 879 ff.

alon, -gon, anon, mon—*Guy*, *A*², st. 23; *Amis*, ll. 1753 ff.

day, way, jurne, se—*Guy*, *A*², st. 32; *Amis*, ll. 962 ff.

mode, wode, ablode, stode—*Guy*, *A*², st. 97; *Amis*, ll. 1311 ff.

like hundreds of others indicated by Dr. Möller, appear, except for a very few accidental omissions,⁷¹ in all the manuscripts, and must, therefore, have been in the original English version. It is certain that the Auchinleck MS could not itself have been that original, for the scribe's errors in repeating line 98 for line 101 and in transposing lines 412 and 413, do not occur elsewhere. All other manuscripts, moreover, have one whole stanza (st. 174, lines 2113-2124) which is omitted in *Amis, A*.⁷² But it is equally certain that this Auchinleck text is, of all those containing the English romance, the nearest to what we must now recognize as the chief supplementary source of that romance. The agreements with *Guy, A²*, range from simple verbal identities, even in spelling,⁷³ to the special correspondences of such whole groups of lines as those in *Amis, A*, lines 102-107 and 415-417. No other text is consistently so close to the stanzaic *Guy*,⁷⁴ and this is precisely what we should expect if *Amis, A*, was the first, and so, presumably, the closest copy of the original English version. In the nature of things it can hardly have been anything else, for the original cannot have been composed until the stanzaic *Guy* was complete, and the stanzaic *Guy*, with its sequel *Reinbroun*, unless the evidence altogether deceives us, was specifically made for the Auchinleck MS. All three romances would seem, therefore, to have been

C. Stanzas having the same combinations of different rimes:

fare, z̄are, care, sare, mode—*Guy, A²*, st. 34; *Amis*, ll. 253 ff.

stille, ille, wille, spille, don—*Guy, A²*, st. 27; *Amis*, ll. 637 ff. Same order.

tide, toun, processoun, side—*Guy, A²*, st. 270; *Amis*, ll. 1372 ff. Same order.

dring, wiþ-ouen lesing, ful mende—*Guy, A²*, st. 281; *Amis*, ll. 2191 ff. Same order.

⁷¹ Of the thirty-eight lines here quoted from *Amis, A*, only two lines are omitted in any other manuscript. S omits line 417; SD omit the whole stanza in which line 1515 appears.

⁷² Cf. Leach, p. xcvi: 'A omits a stanza at line 2113 which is present in γ' (i.e., the source of H and SD).

⁷³ The rimes in the lines quoted from *Amis, A*, kept intact in all the manuscripts except in two cases of obvious scribal error: 64, AHD have sonde, S has wrongly honde; 105, AHS have kipe, D has wrongly kepe. Against the other three manuscripts *Amis, A*, agrees with *Guy, A²*, in the following instances: 97, þat A, þe SDH; 103, mirþe & melody A, gamen and blee S, game & HD; 104, menstracie A, mynstralcy SDH; 107, her A, om. SDH; 108, þonked A, þankyð SDH; 415, Miche A, Mony S, Moche DH; 409, So A, om. SH, And D.

⁷⁴ In a few very minor instances in our thirty-eight lines other manuscripts of *Amis* agree, though in always different groupings, even more closely with *Guy, A²*, than does *Amis, A*. Cf. *Amis*, 98, wiþ om. DH; *Guy*, st. 16 (4), wiþ om.; *Amis*, 416, Erls A, Of erls SH, *Guy*, st. 15 (8), Of erls; *Amis*, 1374, for noþing þai nold abide A, No lenger will (wold D) he abyde SD, *Guy*, st. 270 (11) No lenger he nold abide.

composed and copied almost contemporaneously, although it is certain that *Guy, A²*, preceded both *Reinbroun* and *Amis and Amiloun*.

In objection to this conclusion concerning the origin of the three English romances, certain issues might be raised. Though it must be granted that the author of *Amis* borrowed largely from the stanzaic *Guy*, is it not possible to suppose that another copy of *Guy, A²*, was in circulation and that the *Amis* author, wherever he was, simply made use of it? Is it possible to think that the original *Amis* was composed for the Auchinleck MS and yet was faultily copied in it?

Such queries would rest, I believe, on questionable assumptions. Apart from the reasons already given for the probably genuine uniqueness of the stanzaic *Guy*, we must again remember the unlikelihood, outside London itself, of such quick circulation of English texts (and we are here, fortunately, considering, not possible oral versions, but only texts and textual borrowings) as would be indicated by the almost simultaneous borrowing from the stanzaic *Guy* if the translators of both *Reinbroun* and *Amis* were in different places. All three poems, it must be remembered, seem to have been composed within the years 1300-1330. If the authors of the last two romances, or as we might add for good measure, the author of the Auchinleck version of the *Short Metrical Chronicle*, who borrowed extensively from the Auchinleck version of *Richard Cœur de Lion*,⁷⁵ if these men did not work in the same place, then we must assume such a rapid, early, and wide-spread circulation of English texts as in itself constitutes a strong improbability.

The free and easy copying apparent in the Auchinleck *Amis* certainly calls for comment. As Professor Leach has observed, this text omits a stanza, has thirty-seven unique lines, and a large number of small variant readings; in this, as in *each of the three other extant texts of Amis*, "minor differences in wording and order meet the eye on almost every line." In other words, all the *Amis* texts reveal the same freedom in transcribing the original,

⁷⁵ Cf. Zettl's edition of the *Chronicle* (see note 20, above), pp. xcv-xcvii. The highly independent author of the Auchinleck version added all told, according to Zettl, p. cxxxii, about 1500 lines to the original text of the *Chronicle*. One of these additions, concerned with a local London legend, is of particular interest. See below, note 92. It has seemed inadvisable, within the necessary limits of one article, to attempt further illustration of the inter-relations of the Auchinleck texts. It is a subject that invites cooperative study.

and each one may be considered a typical instance, though it was written at a different time and place from each of the others, of the little insistence there was anywhere on the accurate copying of secular English texts. The particular habits of the *a*-scribe, who was certainly the busiest of the five employed on the Auchinleck MS, have never been studied comparatively, apart from linguistic considerations, although, as was suggested more than thirty years ago, it is an urgent desideratum.⁷⁶ As revealed, however, by the *Amis* text alone, he is shown, like other copyists described by Chambers in connection with manuscripts of *Piers Plowman*,⁷⁷ to have been always quick to relieve the boredom of exact copying by small substitutions—which did not affect the meaning of his original. In the very number and ease of his substitutions, there is a quality of compositional freedom which in itself suggests habits not only of the hack scribe but of the hack author as well. In the work-a-day milieu which we are envisaging as the place of origin for the Auchinleck MS, there can have been no hard and fast distinction drawn between the obscure men who translated and composed, and those who copied such texts as these. We need not identify this *a*-scribe who copied the stanzaic *Guy* with the actual author of *Amis*, although, as remarked above, this has been done, but we can maintain that even if he had composed the original text of *Amis*, it is entirely unjustifiable to suppose that he, any more than any one of the later scribes concerned with the romance, would have felt any obligation to copy it with exactitude. Indeed, if he were the author, he might have felt even more free to change his copy as he went along. But whether he was the translator-author of *Amis* or merely the copyist of a text made by some other obscure Englishman like himself, it must be urged that the *a*-man's free or faulty copying of *Amis*, whichever way one chooses to regard it, proves nothing at all.

The ancient scribal tradition of exact copying survives in many grave and costly manuscripts that were deemed truly important by the later Middle Ages; for lesser manuscripts, and espe-

⁷⁶ See above, note 20.

⁷⁷ R. W. Chambers and J. H. Grattan, "The Text of *Piers Plowman*," *MLR*, XXVI (1931), 15, make the following illuminating remarks: "There were institutions where consistent accuracy in transcription was demanded. . . . But there were also, transcribers of English manuscripts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries who relieved the monotony of their work by constantly allowing themselves to make small substitutions of words and phrases, without altering the meaning. . . . Scribes were addicted to the substitution of similars."

cially for secular texts written in the vernacular, there seems to have been no such restraining influence.⁷⁸ If all through the fourteenth century even the most important English authors, such as Chaucer and Gower, could take the apologetic tone which they did take over the matter of *composing* in English,⁷⁹ how much less seriously must the scribes in general have taken the business of transcribing in this still, so-little regarded English! Time has made us reverential about all medieval texts, but there is not the slightest reason for supposing that in the Middle Ages any text of its vernacular popular poetry was regarded as sacrosanct, not even those religious texts that, in England, were most devoutly intended for the instruction and edification of the layman. Though the fact has been all too little emphasized, every cultural and psychological element of the first half of the fourteenth century in England that is now known to us should forbid us to assume that any scribe of the period, no matter how professional, no matter what the origin of the secular text he was given to transcribe, would have copied with scrupulous accuracy or regarded its English verse with entire seriousness. He would have been more apt to treat it as the well-cursed Adam Scriveyn, some fifty or sixty years later, was to treat even Chaucer's own transcendent poem, *Troilus and Criseyde*, with characteristic "negligence and rape."

Our observations of the four romances here considered, the couplet and the stanzaic versions of *Guy of Warwick*, the sequel, *Reinbroun*, and *Amis and Amiloun*, as found in the Auchinleck MS, and of the *Chronicle's* use of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, lead to certain conclusions which are at odds with a good many previous theories. For one thing it becomes impossible to suppose that

⁷⁸ For a good illustration of what a contemporary scribe could do in the way of twice copying the same passage from the same source (*Manuel des Pechiez*), see C. Laird, "A Fourteenth Century Scribe," *MLN*, LV (1940), 601.

In his study of "Thomas Hoccleve, Scribe," H. C. Schulz, *Speculum*, XII (1937), 71-91, shows that, as scribe, Hoccleve wrote both court and book hands, and that, in copying his own work some twenty years after its composition, he exposed his text "not only to the common errors of a copyist, but also to the legitimate substitution of words, and to other errors incidental to the suspension of scribal discipline." This specific instance of what happened when author and scribe were identical has pertinence for the study of the Auchinleck text of *Amis*, at least for those who continue to accept the identification of its author and scribe. Of interest, too, are Dr. Schulz's brief comments (p. 72) on monastic and commercial scriptoria.

⁷⁹ Cf. the references to English in the *Chaucer Concordance*.

minstrels and their oral versions had anything to do with any one of the four English romances, or with the *Chronicle*. The texts are self-explanatory and predicate written texts alone. Only the circumstance that the first four have never been observed as a group has prevented the realization of their textual relationship and its significance. The unique separation of *Guy of Warwick* into three separate romances indicates, as clearly as anything could, a deliberate intention and purpose which can only be ascribed to the man responsible for making the manuscript, its supervising director, or, as we should say, its editor. His control of the content put into these romances and of the versifiers who composed them, is as plain as the single format he imposed on the five men who transcribed the book. That the "authors," the translators and versifiers, worked in some sort of unison, at approximately the same time and place, is shown by the use they made of each other's texts, by the dependence of the stanzaic *Guy* upon the couplet *Guy*, by the dependence of both *Reinbroun* and *Amis and Amiloun* upon this same stanzaic *Guy*, by the *Chronicle's* use of *Richard*. In days when there can have been very little circulation of English texts, such interinfluence between the texts, must indicate that the "authors" were in association with each other. No less than the scribes who copied these romances, the English authors likewise evidently worked in group association. And that association, since the volume itself was so largely written by London scribes, would most naturally have been in a London bookshop.

This conclusion clashes also, it must be admitted, with certain previous studies based solely on linguistic evidence. Though it has long been agreed that all four romances, to speak of them alone, are in the Midland dialect, it has been suggested that the couplet *Guy* came from South Warwickshire, also from the South-East;⁸⁰ that the stanzaic *Guy* came from a slightly more northern region;⁸¹ *Reinbroun* from a region somewhat more to the North-

⁸⁰ A. Brandl, *Mittelengl. Lit.*, 1100-1500, in Paul's *Grundriss der germanischen Philologie* (Strassburg, 1893), II, Abt. I, p. 636, suggested a south-west Midland origin for the couplet version of *Guy*, possibly South-Warwickshire. Möller, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-21, believed the author came from south-eastern England in the neighborhood of Kent.

⁸¹ Oscar Wilda, *Über die örtliche Verbreitung der zwölfzeiligen Schweifreimstrophe in England* (Breslau, 1887), 46-55, suggested Essex for the home of the author of the stanzaic version. Möller, pp. 22-35, felt assured of the more southern origin of the couplet version.

West;⁸² *Amis* from the North-East.⁸³ A vehement attempt has been made to claim all three of the tail-rime romances for East Anglia,⁸⁴ an attempt which has been vigorously disputed.⁸⁵ Even if there were agreement about these more specific allocations, as most certainly there is not, it must be emphasized that not one of the linguistic studies just cited has given any consideration to the scribes who copied these texts; moreover, not one has admitted, as is only too generally true in dialect studies, that after all *speech habits do travel with a man*; he does not lose his provincialisms at the moment he changes his environment. Some of the men who composed the originals from which these four poems were copied may, indeed, have come from the regions to which they have been assigned, but if we admit, for the sake of argument, that their poems were actually composed in those regions, into what baffling difficulties and problems are we plunged! How are we to account for *Reinbroun*, which exists only by virtue of passages omitted in the stanzaic *Guy*? The contents of these two unique versions prove beyond question that the original authors worked in some sort of conjunction with each other. If the author of *Amis* lived exclusively in Norfolk, just how, we must ask, did he get immediate access to the stanzaic *Guy* that was so palpably designed for the Auchinleck MS, or just why, granting that he did get access to it, should his own original *Amis and Amiloun*, replete with borrowings from *Guy*, *A*², return so promptly, so unerringly, to the very shop in which that poem had been produced, there to be copied by the same scribe and in the same book as *Guy*, *A*², itself? Or why, if the stanzaic *Guy* originated in East Anglia, was there such perfect dove-tailing with the couplet version of *Guy*, supposedly produced in South

⁸² Möller, pp. 36-47: "mochte ich den *Reinbrun* etwas südlicher (bezw. südwestlicher als *Guy*, *A*²) verlegen" (p. 46).

⁸³ Kölbing, *Amis and Amiloun*, pp. xxiv-xxxiii; Leach in his edition (Preface) accepted Kölbing's results.

⁸⁴ Trounce, *Medium Aevum*, II, 45: "The vocabulary of *Amis* proves Norfolk beyond a doubt." "The close relationship of *Guy* and *Amis* to each other gives irrefragable support to East Anglia as the locality for both of them." "We may claim Suffolk for *Guy*, as Norfolk for *Amis*, or, at any rate, East Anglia for both of them" (p. 49). "*Reinbroun* is plainly connected with *Guy* in matter and style, but is rather more South-eastern (so also Möller),—Suffolk towards Essex." But cf. Möller's own words as quoted in note 82 above.

⁸⁵ George Taylor, "Notes on *Athelston*," *Leeds Studies in English*, IV (1935), 47-57. He remarks: "The stanzaic *Guy*, *Amis*, and *Horn Childe* support one another in their non-East Anglian origin; one cannot agree that the 'fountain head of the style' does belong 'beyond any doubt to East Anglia.'"

Warwickshire or in the South-East? These and other questions will occur to any one who attempts to reconcile the self-revealing evidence of these texts as to their actual relationship with the theory of completely different origins in different places. If, however, we accept, as there seems such good reason for doing, this linked nucleus of popular English romances as indicative of the nature of their immediate origin, we are provided with an explanation which resolves the problems of relationship and language. For Midland London, as is universally admitted, was the meeting place of many languages, many dialects; it had its established booksellers and their shops, shops in which might be found some small working collection of texts not only for sale, but for copying purposes.⁸⁶ London was the chief center of the book trade in England and to it, then as now, writers of all sorts, must have been drawn. In these four romances we see such men at work, men of diverse local origins, but here united with each other in the entirely realistic business of manufacturing popular romance for sale, of creating some *newe thinges*, some new tales, from old.

We shall never, in all probability, know the names of the Master of the bookshop or of the workmen, the translators, the scribes, the illuminator, who produced the Auchinleck MS, but it is something, nevertheless, to have these obscure yet enterprising English bookmen defined for us as a group. They were "publishing" one of the first really important collections of Middle English verse; they were helping, however unconsciously and carelessly, to establish English verse forms and the language itself as having a rightful domain. In the very scope and variety of the Auchinleck texts, we discern something about the alert and practical intelligence of the compiler, the editor, who may well have been the Master of the shop. How up-to-date he was, how much approximately new material he included in the volume, can be judged, not only from the romances,⁸⁷ but from the two

⁸⁶ No question seems to have been raised as to the collection of English texts which the compilers of the Auchinleck MS must have had before them. Though we may well suppose that a patron might buy or order such a book as the Auchinleck MS as a single book of English verse, the necessary antecedent collection of English originals can best be accounted for as having belonged to some bookseller who made a business of collecting such texts, perhaps for his minstrel clients, or of himself producing those English texts that were still so little valued by the erudite or the wealthy.

⁸⁷ On the modernity, for their own times, of the medieval romances, cf. D. Everett, "The English Medieval Romances," *Essays and Studies*, XV (1929), 103:

poems on the just-ended reign of Edward II, from the *Chronicle* with its allusion to the young Edward III,⁸⁸ and by the fact that of all the forty-odd still extant poems in the volume, only eight are now known in texts which are thought to antedate the Auchinleck MS.⁸⁹ Though many others may, indeed, have existed, still the element of newness in the book is attested not only by its contemporary poems of satire and complaint, but by the evidence given above showing that some new versions of old stories were made for this very manuscript, and by its inclusion, in the *King of Tars*,⁹⁰ of a text that cannot possibly antedate 1300 and may be one or two decades later. The element of local pride and interest in this presumably London-made book is also apparent, for two of the longest topographical passages in the whole volume deal with London and its environs. The Auchinleck *Beves of Hamtoun*, in a passage unknown to the French versions, tells, with many incidental allusions to the Thames, to Westminster, to Tower Street, to Charing, to Chepe, to London Gate, to London Stone, to Bow Street, etc., of a great battle in the streets of London;⁹¹ the Auchinleck version of the *Short Metrical Chronicle* alone contains a long account of the consecrating of West-

“The romances were popular because, unlike so much of the Latin literature known to medieval readers, they were up-to-date in their ideas and properties.” Cf. Sir Walter Raleigh, *Romance* (London, 1916), 25: “The note of this romance literature is that it was actual, modern, realistic at a time when classical literature had become a remote convention of bookish culture.” Only four extant manuscripts containing English romances antedate the Auchinleck MS. They are: Cambridge University Library, Gg. 4. 27. 2 (*King Horn, Floris and Blauncheflur*); Cotton Vitellius D. III (*Floris and Blauncheflur*); Harley 2253 (*King Horn*); Laud Miscellany 108 (*King Horn, Havelok*).

⁸⁸ *On the King's Breaking Magna Carta; On the Evil Times of Edward II; Short Metrical Chronicle*. For the first two, see above, note, 42; for the last, see notes 21, 22, 86.

⁸⁹ The eight Auchinleck poems for which earlier English texts exist are the following: *St. Margaret, St. Katherine, Body and Soul, Harrowing of Hell, Floris and Blauncheflur, Our Lady's Psalter, The Thrush and the Nightingale, The Sayings of St. Bernard*. Cf. Carr, op. cit., II, 152, n. 1.

⁹⁰ See above, note 49. In *Speculum*, XVI (1941), p. 414, Prof. Hornstein remarks: “Within perhaps less than two decades after Ghazan's death (1304), a miracle story of this great khan . . . had found its way into the Auchinleck MS.”

⁹¹ *Beves of Hamtoun*, ed. E. Kölbing, EETES. 46, 48, 65 (1894), lines 4287-4538. *Apropos* of this passage Kölbing remarked (Introd, p. xxxvii); “The last of the English poet's additions deals with Beves's and his sons' heroic resistance against the inhabitants of London. . . . Here the English author shows that he has a pretty exact knowledge of the topography of London.” As this episode appears in all the Middle English manuscripts of *Beves*, it must have belonged to the original English version. The Auchinleck is the oldest of all surviving copies.

minster by no less a person than St. Peter himself!⁹² Such passages must have enhanced, for London readers, the interest of the book. For us they reinforce other evidence as to its probable place of origin.

Although in this initial attempt to consider the Auchinleck MS as a whole, it has only been possible in a few ways to suggest what a mine of unquarried information lies hidden within its leaves, it should, nevertheless, be possible for English-speaking people to take new pride in the venerable volume. For it shows us that more than one hundred and thirty years before Caxton's *Sign of the Red Pale*, there must have been in England, and probably in medieval London itself, a bookshop where, for English laymen, texts of many kinds were newly copied, and some newly translated into English. Between the two shops there was only one great difference; in Caxton's—for the weal or the woe of the world—books were no longer *manu-scripti*.

⁹² *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, ed. Zettl, op. cit., pp. lxviii, 72-75. This is only one of the many unique and important additions to the original text which were made by the author of the Auchinleck version. As Zettl has pointed out in his fine edition of the *Chronicle* (p. xlvii, xlix, li, etc.), this redactor was a writer of special enterprise and independence. His use of the Auchinleck version of *Richard Cœur de Lion* (cf. note 75 above) would suggest that he wrote within the same milieu that produced the volume itself.

THE SAINT MERCURIUS LEGEND IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND IN NORSE SAGA*

THERE is something almost as evasive, as slippery, as mercury itself about this saint who was supposedly martyred in the third century but who was certainly most famous as a celestial warrior. The notable investigation of his cult, published in 1937 by Stéphane Binon, showed that Mercurius owed his name to a linguistic misconception and the program of his sufferings to that already established for other saints, to say nothing of other borrowings.¹ Yet, however uncertain in origin, the cult was ancient and widespread. It began late in the fifth or early sixth century in the city of Caesarea where his tomb and arms were later shown; from Cappadocia it passed into the Near Eastern world where relics, churches, monasteries, liturgies, Greek, Coptic, Arabian, Slavic, etc., continued to attest its fame.² In a Syrian romance composed at Odessa between 502 and 532, Markur, one of the Forty Martyrs, was named as the posthumous slayer of Julian the Apostate (d. 363).³ Relics of St. Mercurius were first introduced into the West by the Duke of Benevento, Aréchis II (758-87), who had the saint's Greek Passion translated into Latin and the relics deposited (768) at the splendid new basilica of Santa Sophia in Benevento. No fewer than five fêtes were annually celebrated

* From *Philologica: Malone Anniversary Studies* (1949), 132-43.

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¹ Stéphane Binon, *Essai sur le cycle de Saint Mercure* (Paris, 1937), Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes Études, Sciences Religieuses, LIII, 1-144, Bibliographie, pp. 1-10. For the name of Mercurius see pp. 19-20.

² *Ibid.*, ch. 1, Tradition Littéraire (Lives and Legends of St. Mercurius, diffusion in the East and West); ch. II, Tradition Liturgique (The cult, fête, representations).

³ *Julian the Apostate*, trans. from the Syriac by H. Gollancz (Oxford, 1928), pp. 153, 189, 190; Binon, p. 22.

there in honor of Mercurius.⁴ In the eighth or ninth century a wholly apocryphal *Life of St. Basil*, written in the East in Greek, and attributed to Basil's co-worker, Amphilochius of Iconium, told of St. Basil's vision of the Virgin Mary commanding the martyr Mercurius to slay the Emperor Julian. In the West this *Life* was translated into Latin at least four times in the ninth and tenth centuries⁵ and the saint's posthumous slaying of Julian became as famous in the West as in the East. As an episode it passed into certain early collections of Miracles of the Virgin; as part of the spurious *Life of Basil* it entered some collections of the *Vitae Patrum*, and in the thirteenth century, when the episode was incorporated in the *Legenda Sanctorum* of Jacobus de Voragine, it became even more widely known.

Though the European versions of the legend of the Death of Julian have been carefully noted by Binon and others, they have said nothing of its presence in England.⁶ Yet it was there, in the tenth century, that the earliest vernacular version of the story appeared, and we shall find other indications of medieval English awareness of St. Mercurius. It is with the insular history of his legend that we are here chiefly concerned.

The earliest reference to St. Mercurius in a manuscript of English origin is found in the famous Codex Epternacensis with its eighth-century copy of the Martyrology attributed to St. Jerome. The copy was made, probably in Northumbria, by Laurentius, a companion of St. Willibrord, who ultimately left this manuscript to Epternach.⁷ Under *Augustus* it reads: "VII Kl. Sept. . . and in Eclano Mercuri."⁸ This refers to August 26, the fête of the translation of the relics of St. Mercurius from

⁴ Binon, pp. 42-53, 99 f.

⁵ G. de Jerphanion, "Histoires de S. Basile dans les peintures cappadociennes et dans les peintures romaines au M. A.", *Byzantion*, VI (1931), 553-56, gives the best manuscript history of the first three of these translations, but without indication of the frequent omission of the Julian episode; neither does Binon, p. 54. For the unabridged fourth, see below, n. 15.

⁶ Binon, pp. 54-57; R. Foerster, "Kaiser Julian in der Dichtung alter und neuer Zeit," *Studien zur vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte*, V (1905), 1-120, and others listed by these two authors.

⁷ Dom John Chapman, "A propos des Martyrologes," *Revue Benedictine*, XX (1903), 293. The archetype of the manuscript is thought to have come from Italy. Cf. *Calendar of St. Willibrord*, ed. H. A. Wilson (London, 1918), p. x.

⁸ St. Jerome's Martyrology, ed. in *Acta Sanctorum* (Brussels, 1931), Nov., II, 468, for Mercurius. Binon, pp. 52, 99, thought the Cappadocian saint usurped at Benevento the name and date of a local saint of Aeclanum who was named in St. Jerome's Martyrology.

Aeclanum to Benevento. No reference to the saint appeared in the Martyrology of Bede-Florus (9th c.), nor in the Anglo-Saxon Martyrology of the same period which mentions over two hundred saints.⁹ It must be admitted that in England, as in France, church calendars, sacramentaries, breviaries, et cetera, rarely mention the saint's name.¹⁰ There were, it would seem, no foundations in his honor in either country, no signs of any cult.¹¹ In those triumphant liturgical acclamations, the *Laudes Regiae*, as Kantorowicz has recently shown, the soldier saints were commonly invoked, but in those of French origin before the thirteenth century, Mercurius occurs only once, in the eighth-century *Laudes* of Besançon;¹² in England not even one such invocation has been noted. The Church itself did little apparently, outside of Italy, to stimulate interest in the Cappadocian and Beneventan saint. From the eighth to the tenth century in England, we find no recorded reference to him.

The wise and learned Ælfric was still but a monk at Cernel in Dorset when he wrote, in 990-91, the first of those two series of *Catholic Homilies* which he intended to be used as sermons for the Church year.¹³ For the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, August 15, he translated a large part of St. Jerome's *Epistola ad Paulam et Eustochium*, but feeling that as a whole it was somewhat too deep for the laity, he inserted two Miracles of the Virgin, one concerned with her saving of Theophilus, the other with her destruction of Julian.¹⁴ The last story he translated into Anglo-Saxon prose from an anonymous, unabridged tenth-century Latin version of the Life of St. Basil by the pseudo-Amphilochius.¹⁵ An

⁹ Bede-Florus Martyrology, *Acta Sanctorum* (1865), Mart. II, p. xxxi; *An Old English Martyrology*, ed. G. Herzfeld (London, 1899), EETS, No. 116.

¹⁰ The indices of the monumental volumes of Abbé Victor Leroquais on liturgical MSS list no references to St. Mercurius before the fourteenth century; cf. *Sacramentaires, Missels* (Paris, 1924); *Bréviaires* (Paris, 1934). The many books of M. R. James on English libraries list no references to St. Mercurius in the liturgical MSS he examined.

¹¹ L. H. Cottineau, *Répertoire Topo-Bibliographique des Abbayes et Prieurés* (Macon, 1935-38) has but one reference. For Italy, see Binon, pp. 100 f.

¹² Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae, A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship*, Berkeley, 1946, p. 29.

¹³ K. Sisam, "Ælfric's Catholic Homilies, MS Bodley 340, 342," *RES*, VII (1931), 51-68; IX, 1-12.

¹⁴ These two of the so-called Element Miracles (*Theophilus*, air; *Julian*, earth) appeared in the second of the earliest collections of Miracles of the Virgin. Cf. H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the British Museum* (London, 1893), II, 591.

¹⁵ Max Förster, *Ueber die Quellen von Ælfric's Homiliae Catholicae* (Berlin,

extant twelfth-century text,¹⁶ shows close relationship but it is much longer than Ælfric's version. His concluding comment of five lines on Mercurius, who had lived as a layman but whose body and weapons, after his martyrdom by heathen men, had been placed by Christians within the temple, seems to be merely a generalized afterthought based on the story he had just told. It does not indicate any knowledge on Ælfric's part of the Latin *Passio*. Ælfric begins his account by stating: "We wyllað eac eow gereccan be geendunge ðæs arleasan Godes wiðersacan Iulianes." But the story goes back to the meeting of Bishop Basil of Capadocia and the Emperor Julian, who had once been his school-mate. The Emperor has renounced Christianity; he is on his way to attack the Persians. He boasts to Basil of his own superior philosophy and becomes enraged when Basil offers him three barley loaves. He gives grass in return and departs vowing to lay waste the city on his return. Basil asks the people to fast and pray for three days in the Church of Our Lady outside the city and to bring their treasures to the church in the hope that these might ultimately soften the tyrant's heart. On the third night Basil has a vision of Julian's death:¹⁷

Ða on ðære ðriddan nihte ðæs fæstenes geseah se bisceop micel heofenlice werod on ælse healfe ðæs temples, and on middan ðam werode sæt seo heofenlice cwen Maria, and cwæð to hire ætstandendum, "Gelangiað me ðone martyr Mercurium, þæt he gewende wið ðæs arleasan Iulianes, and hine acwelle, seðe mid toðundenum mode God minne Sunu forsihð. Se halga cyðere Mercurius gewæpnod hrædlice com, and be hyre hæse ferde. Ða eode se bisceop into ðære oðre cyrcan, þær se martyr inne læig, and befran ðone cyrcweard hwær ðæs halgan wæpnu wæron. He swor þæt he on æfnunge æt his heafde witodlice hi gesawe. And he þær-rihte wende to Sca. Marian temple,

1892), p. 28; J. H. Ott, *Ueber die Quellen der heiligen leben in Ælfrics Lives of Saints* (Halle, 1892), pp. 10-14. Ott knew only the third of the early Latin translations but he recognized in it gaps which made it an impossible source for Ælfric. For the unabridged *Vita Basilii* the latter did use, Ott knew only the sixteenth century text printed by L. Surius, *De Probatis Sanctorum historiis* (Colonix Agrippinæ, 1575), VI, 569-72, and subsequent editions. Cf. Binon, p. 30, n. 1.

¹⁶ Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, cod. lat. 498, f. 46 ff., printed by R. Foerster, *Stud. zur Vergleich. Lit.*, V (1905), 7-9. Foerster's introductory remarks on the other Latin versions should be disregarded. This Latin text is entitled *De mistica satis reuelatione et morte apostatae Iuliani*.

¹⁷ *Sermones Catholici or Homilies of Ælfric*, ed. and translated by Benj. Thorpe (London, 1844), I, 450-52.

and *ðam folce gecyðde his gesihðe*, and *ðæs wælhreowan forwyrd*. *Þa eode he eft ongean to ðæs halgan martyres byrgenne*, and funde his spere standan mid blode begleddod.

Þa æfter þrim dagum com an ðæs caseres ðegna, Libanius hatte, and gesohte *ðæs bisceopes fet*, fulluhtes biddende, and *cyðde him and ealre ðære buruhware þæs arleasan Iulianes deað*: *cwæð þæt seo fyrd wicode wið ða ea Eufraten, and seofon weard-setl wacodon ofer ðone casere*. *Þa com þær stæppende sum uncuð cempa, and hine hetelice ðurhðyde*, and *ðærrihthe of hyra gesihðum fordwan*; and Iulianus *ða mid anðræcum hreame forswealt*. Swa wearð seo burhwaru ahred þurh Sca. Marian wið ðone Godes wiðersacan. . . .

In his third series of homilies, written between 993-98, Ælfric said that he would now write concerning those saints whom monks in their offices honor among themselves.¹⁸ His compilation showed a remarkable interest in the military saints, men who had been soldiers before they became saints. He included the stories of the Forty Soldier Martyrs (No. 11), of St. George (No. 14), of St. Mauricius (No. 28) and of St. Eustace (No. 30). The Life of St. Basil (No. 3)¹⁹ was given as a whole with several details in the Julian episode that had been omitted before. It refers, for instance, twice to the mount (ll. 235, 261) on which was the church to which Basil was wont to repair, and also to Eubolus (l. 254), Basil's friend. Neither reference mattered when the story was told as a Miracle of the Virgin, but each was important in the Life of Basil. The three-day space, intervening in the first version between the bishop's vision and the announcement by Libanus of Julian's death, is changed to seven days, the time in the Latin versions.²⁰ From the number of identical words in Ælfric's two versions, italicized in the passage quoted above, it would seem that he wrote the second with the first before him, though always with his characteristic freedom. The same words

¹⁸ *Ælfric's Lives of the Saints*, ed. and translated by W. W. Skeat (London, 1900), I, 4.

¹⁹ *Depositio S. Basilii* (Jan. 1). To this Ælfric gave 650 lines of alliterative verse (Skeat's ed. I, 50 ff.); the Death of Julian episode begins at l. 241. Previously the meeting of Basil and Julian had been related; the Emperor insulted his old schoolmate and departed on his Persian expedition vowing on his return to lay waste Basil's church and city.

²⁰ "Usque in finem septem diebus omnibus in ecclesia congregatis ecce Libanius Iuliani questor fuga usus uenit in ciuitatem . . . et dicens, quia cum secus Eufraten fluuium esset et relicta nocte septima excubiae militum custodirent eum [Julian], uenit quidam ignotus miles cum armorum uasis at lancea ualide et terribili impetu perfodit eum." Quoted from the text given by R. Foerster (see above, n. 16), p. 9.

are often used but in different constructions. He must also have had his original Latin source from which he took some of the details added here. It seems probable that the Latin *Life of Basil* came to him in some collection of the *Vitae Patrum*.²¹ Of this as a whole he spoke cautiously in the Preface to his *Saints' Lives* where he confessed he could not understand all its *subtilia*. Whatever his doubts about other stories, he fortunately felt sufficient confidence in the apocryphal *Life of Basil* to translate it and so give us the earliest vernacular versions of the legend of Julian's death through the spear of St. Mercurius.

It was this story, either in Ælfric's source or in his own versions, which inspired the legend of the slaying of the tyrant Sweyn (d. 1014) by St. Edmund, the royal saint martyred by the Danes in East Anglia in 870. In *De Miraculis S. Eadmundi*, for which Hermann, Archdeacon of Bury St. Edmund's Abbey, had gathered the materials before 1097, the story is told of Sweyn's harsh demand for tribute and then of how the monk Egilwin, who had pleaded in vain for the abbey's exemption, hears of the king's sudden death, "sequenti nocte mala morte multatum, perfossum cuspidе terribiliter vita decisisse." As Wright²² has pointed out, this brief reference became a fully developed tale in the works of Florence of Worcester (d. 1118), Symeon of Durham, and William of Malmesbury. Unquestionably the emphasis on the sins of the tyrant, his threat to lay waste a holy place, his blasphemy, the divine will for vengeance, the armed martyr-saint coming with his weapon to pierce the king, are simply reflections of the older story. The Sweyn legend is more dramatically told and may well preserve something of the dramatic speech²³ of

²¹ For the best classification of printed editions of the *Vitae Patrum* see the Bollandists' *Bibliotheca hagiographica latina* (Brussels, 1900-01), II, 943-50. No comparable work has been done on the MSS, which vary greatly in order and content. Constance Rosenthal's *The Vitae Patrum in Old and Middle English Literature* (Philadelphia, 1936), though she discusses Ælfric's use of the *Life of Basil* (p. 59), adds nothing to Ott (see above, n. 15).

²² C. E. Wright, *The Cultivation of Saga in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1939), pp. 172-74.

²³ The outcries of Sweyn are especially to be noted: "Succurite, commilitones, succurite; ecce sanctus Eadmundus me venit occidere." (Wright, pp. 173, 282). The story shows signs of confusion; Sweyn is holding court at Gainsborough but when the saint kills him he is said to fall from his horse. This looks like the joining of two different tales. Though Wright himself, pp. 58-60, traces the oral transmission for over one hundred years of a story of King Edmund's death, he rejects (p. 61) the idea that oral tradition added much to the Edmund cycle before the end of the eleventh century. It was then, he believes, that the Sweyn story came into being.

those oral tales about St. Edmund which were current even in the tenth century. Ælfric himself, in translating the *Passio Eadmundi* written by Abbo of Fleury (985-87), remarked:

Fela wundra we gehyrdon on folcligre spræce be þam halgan Ead-
munde þe we her nellaþ on gewrite settan ac hi wat gehwa.²⁴

If these oral tales of wonder already included the Sweyn story, then it must have drifted into popular speech from its source in some tenth-century Latin version of the Julian legend. But in any case we may be sure the scrupulous Ælfric would have refrained from quoting it since he would have been the first to recognize, from his own translation of the earlier legend, the palpable imitation in the Sweyn story.

The relationship was certainly recognized by other medieval Englishmen. In a most interesting passage, quoted by Wright²⁵ from the late thirteenth-century *Knytlinga Saga* (c. 6), we hear of what Englishmen were still *saying* about St. Edmund's killing of Sweyn, just as St. Mercurius had killed Julian:

Ok er þat sögn Enskra manna, at Eadmundr hinn helgi hafi drepit hann, með þeima hætti senn hinn helgi Mercurius drap Julianum niding.

The remark seems to indicate the late survival of oral versions of the two stories. It plainly recognizes their connection and it offers important evidence (as the *Karlamagnus Saga*, which we shall presently consider, does likewise), of the interest taken by Norse writers in the legend of St. Mercurius as they found it in England.

Though the eleven extant texts²⁶ of Ælfric's *Lives of the Saints* show it was somewhat widely diffused, inevitably after the Conquest these texts, like all others in Anglo-Saxon, fell into disuse. Latin texts of the kind that Ælfric had used, wherever they survived in English libraries, were welcomed by the Norman ecclesiastics; more they imported or copied or translated anew. Many Anglo-Norman texts were off-shoots of the *Vitae Patrum*, though we have no extant version of the *Life of Basil*. The episode of the Virgin's miraculous intervention as first told in that life, but later isolated as a special Miracle, appeared in the well-

²⁴ *Saints' Lives*, II, 332, l. 247-49.

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 172.

²⁶ Marguerite Dubois, *Ælfric, Sermonnaire, Docteur et Grammairien* (Paris, 1943), p. 327. Three are assigned to the period 1025-50; four to 1050-75; four to 1100-25.

known Anglo-Norman collection of her *Miracles* made by Adgar about the middle of the twelfth century. This he translated, so he says, from *l'esemplaire* of Mestre Albri, whose Latin book he had found at St. Paul's in London.²⁷ Adgar's sixteenth Miracle, told in eighty-eight lines, was the Death of Julian. Twelve different Latin versions of this Miracle have been noted but not one of them seems to have served Adgar for his source.²⁸ His rhymed version omits all names save those of *Basille, Cesaire, Capadoce, Julian, and Mercurie*; it omits indications of time; it condenses the narrative. But it adds a characteristic chivalric note and offers, just as Ælfric did, a brief comment on the martyred saint:

- 43 Vit li euesques, en suniant,
 Angles del ciel, clers, reluisant,
 (f. 21v) Del haut ciel la cheualerie;
 Enni els uit sainte Marie,
 E la dame dist cruelment,
 En oance d'icel couvent:
 "Apelez ça Mercurium,
 50 Ki uoist tuer Julianum,
 Julien le fel, le renee,
 Ki ad ceste cite iugee."
 Quant Mercurie ert auant uenu,
 Od sa lance se est esmeu
 Sanz cuntredit, hastiuement,
 Pur faire sun comandement.
 Icil Mercurie esteit martir,
 De bon cuer soleit deu seruir,
 E fud pur amour deu ocis
 60 De paens, de deu enemis.

²⁷ Carl Neuhaus, *Adgars Marien-Legenden nach der Londoner Hds.*, Egerton 612 (Heilbronn, 1886). From this text is quoted our selection from the Julian story (No. 16). Cf. Ward, *Cat. of Romances*, II, 708-87; J. A. Herbert, "A New MS of Adgar's Mary Legends," *Romania*, XXXII (1903), 394-421. The two MSS date respectively from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century and from the thirteenth. In the second the Death of Julian is No. 22.

²⁸ P. A. Poncelet, Index miraculorum B. V. Mariae in *Analecta Bollandiana*, XXI (1902), Nos. 318, 506, 563 (*Legenda Aurea*), 803, 918-22, 1012, 1140, 1205. Cf. Binon, pp. 55-56, who inadvertently spoke of Adgar as one of the poets in France who wrote of the Death of Julian. C. Neuhaus, *Die Quellen zu Adgars Marienlegenden* (Aschersleben, 1882), pp. 54-56; *Die lat. Vorlagen zu den Adgarschen Marienlegenden* (Aschersleben, 1887), pp. 25-26, thought the collection in Cotton Cleopatra C X, f. 100-43, the nearest in kind to Adgar's, but not the direct source of the Julian story.

The remaining part of the poem tells of St. Basil's visit to the martyr's shrine, of his failure to find the arms of Mercurius, his account of his own vision to the people, and his return to the shrine where he found hanging the blood-stained lance. Adgar's collection, in whole or in part, survives in three manuscripts.²⁹ But so far as we are aware, no Middle English translation of his Julian story was made nor of any prior version until the fifteenth century.³⁰ It appeared then, not as a separate Miracle, but as a part of the two English translations of Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Sanctorum*, the anonymous translation made in 1438 and that in Caxton's *Golden Legend*³¹ in 1483. In these, as in the original *Legenda*, the Death of Julian occurred, not as a part of the *Life of St. Basil* (June 14) of the pseudo-Amphilochius, to which it properly belonged, but as an antitype to the stories of the various St. Julians (January 7). Aside from these late Middle English versions, we have noted no other accounts in English of the Death of Julian, no extant English reference to St. Mercurius.

This fact heightens interest in the evidence afforded by the *Karlamagnus Saga*, no less than by the *Knytlinga Saga*, that their Norse authors had found in England material that interested them in St. Mercurius. It has long been recognized that all the versions of the Carolingian stories in this vast compilation came from England, not from the Continent, and that the first compilation was made before 1250, the second after 1286.³² For our present purpose the question of date is of small importance; not when, but how, did two allusions to St. Mercurius come into the *Saga*?

The allusion in Book IV is easy to explain. In large part this section is a translation of that widely popular *chanson de geste*, the *Chanson d'Aspremont* (1174-90). In this Norse version, which

²⁹ See above, n. 27 (Herbert). The Dulwich fragment does not contain the Julian story.

³⁰ Rosenthal, *op. cit.*, p. 56: "Latin and Middle English exempla relate how Basil prophesied the death of Julian." In her own list of exempla drawn from the *Vitae Patrum*, pp. 141-43, she gives no instance of such an exemplum. Neither does J. Th. Welter, *L'Exemplum dans la litt. religieuse et didactique du M. A.* (Paris, 1927).

³¹ Rosenthal, p. 65. Caxton's translation was based on the French version of Jean de Vignay.

³² H. G. Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1921), pp. 238-39; H. M. Smyser and F. P. Magoun, *Survivals in Old Norwegian* (Baltimore, 1941), p. v.

as a whole de Waarde³³ felt represented the original more nearly than any of the extant French texts, the Saracens under King Agulandus invade Italy and fight terribly with the depleted Christians. Suddenly three knights in shining armor descend from the mountains to fight in the ranks beside Oddgeir and Rollant:

þeir guds riddarar, Georgius, Demetrius ok Mercurius, soekjardi all-djarfliga.³⁴

These three knights of God, battling very boldly, win victory for the Christians. The French texts of *Aspremont* occasionally vary the names, but these were the three soldier saints of a famous legend of the First Crusade. According to many chroniclers this shining trio likewise descended from the mountains to help the Crusaders before Antioch. In the twelfth century the legend was absorbed into *Aspremont*;³⁵ and reached the Norse translator in some Anglo-Norman version. But it is also worth noting that the original legend was reported by Matthew Paris in his *Chronica Majora*³⁶ and that he himself visited Norway in 1248 and became the friend of King Hákon Hákonarson (1217-63), in whose time the first recension of the *Karlamagnus Saga* was made.³⁷

The Saga's other reference to St. Mercurius is even more interesting and has never been explained.³⁸ It came, not from a simple translation into Norse of an antecedent French text, but from a direct substitution of this saint's name for that of St. Mauricius. Since there are other instances of a similar inter-

³³ Roelof van Waarde, *Études sur l'Origine et la Formation de la Chanson d'Aspremont* (Groningen, 1937), ch. VII, *La Karlamagnus-Saga*. See especially pp. 202 ff.

³⁴ *Karlamagnus Saga*, ed. C. R. Unger (Christiania, 1860), (Branch) IV, c. 72, p. 255. The writer is greatly indebted to Professor Hamilton Smyser for help in translation of numerous passages in the Saga.

³⁵ Cf. de Waarde, pp. 183-84, 246-48. He believed the nucleus of the *Aspremont* account was in the St. George legend connected with the battle of Ramleh, 1177. But he admitted (p. 183) "rien ne s'oppose à admettre . . . que l'auteur s'inspire ici d'un chroniqueur de la première croisade, notamment de l'Anonyme ou d'un de ses remanieurs." He also admitted the possibility of indebtedness to a primitive lost Chanson d'Antioche.

³⁶ *Chronica majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (London, 1872-83), II, 88.

³⁷ Leach, op. cit., p. 103.

³⁸ Jules Coulet, *Études sur . . . Voyage de Charlemagne* (Montpellier, 1907), p. 157, merely speculated about the relic. He included a French translation of this section of the *Karlamagnus Saga*.

change of these two names³⁹ we cannot be sure whether it was a conscious or unconscious substitution. Both were military saints, both had famous lances, both had names which began with M! The possibility of confusion is obvious. We incline, however, to believe the change was deliberate. The other *Saga* reference shows that St. Mercurius was known to these Norse compilers and there can be no question that, in the original tradition of purely English origin by which the Norse writer of Book I was affected, the name that appeared was that of St. Mauricius.

The first book of the *Karlamagnus Saga* tells in part of Charlemagne's adventures on his fabulous journey to the East; in Constantinople he receives five holy relics. In the amazing fabrication which was written before 1160, the *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus clavum et coronam Domini a Constantinopoli Aquisgrani detulerit*, and in all its direct translations into French,⁴⁰ Charlemagne received seven relics, four of them, a Nail, the Crown of Thorns, a bit of the Cross, the *sudarium* (*suaire*) or napkin wrapped about Our Lord's head, being relics of Christ's Passion; another relic was a piece of His swaddling clothes. In the Norse version the *suaire* has become Christ's sweat-cloth (*sveitadúk*); His swaddling clothes, His hose (*hans*); the bit of the Cross remains the same. Two new relics are added: the point of the spear which was thrust into His side, and the lance of St. Mercurius:⁴¹

ok oddinn af spjótinu er lagt var í síðu honum, ok spjót hins helga Merkurii

For these two objects thus conjoined and associated with Charlemagne there is no known parallel. But in England and in England only, there had existed an entirely independent tradition which told of the sending of noble treasures to King Athelstan

³⁹ *Hierosolymitana historia* by Baldric (Acta Sanctorum, Oct., IV, 203) names George, Demetrius, and Mercurius. In his version Robert the Monk (d. before 1118) has substituted for Mercurius the name of Mauricius. (Migne, PL, CLV, 669). Cf. Binon, p. 99, n. 1.

⁴⁰ Ronald Walpole, "Charlemagne and Roland, A Study of the Source of Two Middle English Metrical Romances, *Roland and Vernagu* and *Otuel and Roland*," *Univ. of Cal. Publ. in Modern Philology*, XXI (1944), 385-452, especially pp. 387, 396-98, 402. He has subsequently proved that the manuscript source of the *Roland and Vernagu* was the French version of the *Descriptio* in Add. MS 40142; cf. *MLN*, LX (1945), 22-26. This MS was copied in England. RV included the relics scene.

⁴¹ *Karlamagnus Saga*, (Branch) I, c. 50, p. 44, ed. Unger.

(d. 939) by the great Hugh of France; among these were two said to have been owned by Charlemagne, i.e., the spear driven into the side of Christ and the *vexillum* of the most blessed martyr Mauricius. The story is reported by William of Malmesbury (1125), though it was of much earlier origin, and reappeared⁴² in the subsequent redactions and adaptations of his work. In the *Short English Chronicle* of the famous Auchinleck MS (1330-40)⁴³ William's story is translated and we hear again of Charlemagne's possession of *þat sper smert* with which *Our lord was istonge to þe hert*, and of *the baner of Seint Moris*. *Baner* here is, of course, a perfectly natural translation of William's *vexillum*, but we must remember that the banner must have been attached to a lance and it was the lance of St. Mauricius that was his best-known symbol.⁴⁴ From the early twelfth to the early fourteenth century we have then in England a clear and thoroughly documented record of the belief that Charlemagne once owned the point of the Passion Lance and also the bannered lance (*vexillum*) of St. Mauricius. The conjunction of the two lances, the ascription of them both to Charlemagne, is a purely English tradition. The Norse compiler must have become aware of it in some form, but because the name of St. Mercurius was more familiar or more interesting to him, he substituted it for that of Mauricius as others, in other connections, had done before him.

Though Mercurius is now a saint completely lost to English hagiography, though at best his legend seems singularly unauthentic, still it is of some interest to have found his name in an English manuscript of the eighth century, to note the legend of his slaying Julian the Apostate reported in Anglo-Saxon by Ælfric in the tenth century, by Adgar in Anglo-Norman in the twelfth,

⁴² *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. Stubbs, Rolls Series (London, 1887), I, 150-51. See my article, "The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Athelstan."

⁴³ *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, ed. Ewald Zettl (London, 1935), EETS, No. 196, pp. 23-24. The present writer shows the influence of this version on the *Roland and Vernagu*, especially in the borrowing of the *sperre long and smert* (cf. MLN, LV [1945], 94-97).

⁴⁴ For *vexillum* see Du Cange, *Glossarium mediae . . . Latinitatis*. For the Mauricius lance, cf. the fundamental work of Adolf Hofmeister, "Die heilige Lanze, ein Abzeichen des alten Reichs," *Untersuchungen zur deutschen Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte*, Hft. XCVI (Breslau, 1908), *passim*. The Mauricius cult began in Germany under Otto I, the Great (936-73); the first extant references to the Lance of St. Mauricius as a symbol of German sovereignty date from the eleventh century (Hofmeister, pp. 64 ff.). In art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the saint is represented with a lance which sometimes has and sometimes has not a banner.

and to realize that, at some time in between, it had inspired the legend of St. Edmund's killing the tyrant Sweyn. Despite a truly remarkable silence about St. Mercurius in ecclesiastical records in England and the total lack of any signs of his cult, still we have the assurance, from Norse writers of the thirteenth century, that men still spoke of him there and it was by legends found in England that their own references to him were inspired.

THE HOLY RELICS OF CHARLEMAGNE AND KING ATHELSTAN: THE LANCES OF LONGINUS AND ST. MAURICIUS*

WILLIAM of Malmesbury tells a vivid and detailed story of certain superb gifts sent to King Athelstan when Hugh the Great of France sought in marriage the hand of the sister of the English king. The gifts were priceless as treasure, as objects of art, as most holy relics. This Gift Story, as we shall call it, has usually been treated, when mentioned at all, as a twelfth-century narrative for which William was the sole authority. But it was derived from an ancient panegyric on Athelstan; its assertion that Athelstan possessed the relics is confirmed by newly noted eleventh-century documents from Exeter cathedral; its influence can be traced in English versions of Carolingian stories. Our present study is chiefly concerned with the little known tenth-century poem in which the Gift Story first appeared, and with the antecedent traditions in France which explain the poem's association of two famous relics with Charlemagne. Questions as to the authenticity of the relics will not be considered. In such matters, as Chaucer once remarked of himself, "I nam no divinistre."

THE ATHELSTAN PANEGYRIC

In 1125, if any learned man in England was qualified to recognize an ancient book when he saw it, that man was William of Malmesbury. He had by then completed the two works which grew out of his wide historical reading, i.e., the first version of his *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*¹ and his *De Gestis Pontificum*

* From *Speculum*, XXV (1950), 437-56. By permission of the Editors.

¹ *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* (ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series, XC, London, 1887). This work will be referred to as *GRA*; for his other work, see below, n. 16. The account of William's life and work given by Stubbs in this edition (I, xii-lii) has not been superseded. It is, however, well supplemented by M. R. James, *Two Ancient English Scholars, St. Aldhelm and William of Malmesbury* (Glasgow, 1931), pp. 8, 15-33.

Anglorum; he had acted as librarian of Malmesbury Abbey and had enlarged its resources. After Bede he was "the most enlightened historian of England." When this experienced, honest scholar says he had read "in quodam sane volumine vetusto" (*GRA*, I, 144) a poem about Athelstan, the statement must be taken seriously.² He was careful to differentiate this and other material, alike written in books "ad instructiones posterorum," from the less authentic songs, "cantilenis per successiones temporum detritis" (*GRA*, I, 155), from which he also gathered stories about the great king. From William's quotations and careful summary, it is evident that the original poem contained a life history of the king, written in terms of glowing panegyric.³ The first quotation is of thirty lines, the second of thirty-three lines, surely enough to prove that the Latin poem did once exist. The historian did not invent it. As a matter of fact, he condemned the poet's style as being what Cicero, "rex facundiae Romanae Tullius," would have called bombastic, and felt that the poet handled his material with some difficulty.⁴ William set down the poem's narrative of Athelstan's boyhood, his coronation, his wars, his generosity and power, his alliances with Continental rulers through the marriage to them of his sisters,⁵ and the detailed

² There is no mention of the panegyric in C. E. Wright's *The Cultivation of Saga in Anglo-Saxon England* (Edinburgh and London, 1939). In this important study he merely notes (p. 156, n. 1) Freeman's remark (*Norman Conquest*, I, 61, n.) "William of M. evidently worked out the life of Athelstan with unusual care, seemingly from lost sources."

³ Cf. F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1943), pp. 335-352, for the most recent and authoritative account of Athelstan's reign. He accepts the lost poem as having the value of a tenth-century source (pp. 315, 335, 686, 688). J. A. Robinson, *The Times of St. Dunstan* (Oxford, 1923), pp. 6, 80, refers to "the fulsome panegyric of a contemporary versifier," and quotes from it some of the holy relics received by Athelstan. The acceptance of William's tenth-century source by these scholars and by Campbell (see below, n. 6), is in marked contrast to the usual omission, in comments on the Gift Story itself, of any reference to William's avowed source. See below, notes 17, 29, 34.

⁴ *GRA*, I, 144. For comment on the style and metre of the panegyric, see Stubbs, *GRA*, II, lxi-lxv. On p. lxiv he spoke of detecting echoes of the original rhymes in William's prose paraphrase. He tentatively ascribed the lost book to the late tenth or early eleventh century. The purely metrical reasons given for this dating do not seem convincing.

⁵ The passage about the marriages has been of special interest to historians. For a full discussion see Stenton, pp. 340-342. One of Athelstan's sisters was married to Charles the Simple, one to Otto I the Great, one to Louis of Aquitaine, "de genere Caroli magni superstes." Though a few historians admit William's use of a lost poetical life of Athelstan for the story of the marriages, they say nothing of its date. Cf. René Poupardin, *Le Royaume de Provence sous les Carolingiens*

account of the embassy and the gifts sent by Hugh of France when the latter sued for the hand of the most beautiful sister. The first passage quoted by William told of the joyous coronation (925) of Athelstan:

Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma
Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida gemma,
Magnus Adelstanus, patriae decus, orbita recti,
Illustris probitas de vero nescia flecti (*GRA*, I, 145).

The second quotation celebrated one of Athelstan's greatest victories in battle. It followed directly after the Gift Story, which William had concluded by remarking that, in his opinion, Athelstan's gift to Malmesbury Abbey of some of the Passion Relics, bits of the Cross and the Crown of Thorns, which he had received from France, accounted for the abbey's preservation. William then resumed his narrative in words that make it plain that the just-told Gift Story was as much a part of the old poem as the lines he is about to quote concerning the battle: "De quo bello tempus est ut illius versifici, de quo omnia haec excerpimus, sententiam ponamus" (*GRA*, I, 151).

The battle was the one also celebrated in the famous Anglo-Saxon poem called *The Battle of Brunanburg*.⁶ The Latin poem, like some other ancient accounts, does not name the site,⁷ but there is no possibility of mistaking the occasion, dated as it was in the twelfth year of Athelstan's reign (937):

Transierat quinos et tres et quatuor annos
Jure regens cives, subigens virtute tyrannos,
Cum redit illa lues Europae noxia labes (*GRA*, I, 151).

After describing the horror of the invasion, the tremendous fight, the passage concluded:

Fugit Analafus, de tot modo milibus unus,
Depositum mortis, fortunae nobile munus,
Post Ethelstanum rebus momenta daturus (*GRA*, I, 152).

(Paris, 1901), pp. 314-319; R. L. Poole, *Studies in Chronology and History* (Oxford, 1934), pp. 115-122.

⁶ *The Battle of Brunanburg* (ed. Alistair Campbell, London, 1938), p. 50. In this definitive edition there are numerous references to William's old poem (pp. 45, 49, 54) and the Latin text is quoted (pp. 155-156) as an independent description of the battle.

⁷ On the site of the battle see Campbell, pp. 43-80, especially, p. 63, n. 2.

The last line must have been written after Athelstan's death.⁸ Troubled times followed it, as evidently the poet knew. But whether he meant by "Analafus" the Anlaf Guthfrithson, King of Dublin, who by 940 had won all England north of Watling Street but who died in 941, or his cousin, Anlaf Sihtricson, who kept up his attacks until finally expelled from England in 952,⁹ it is certain that after that date, at latest, any allusion to an Anlaf's "momenta" would have been pointless. "Post Ethelstanum" contradicts, it is true, William's own earlier remark that the poem was written while Athelstan himself was still living ("adhuc viventis," *GRA*, I, 144), but if the panegyric had been concluded within thirteen years of his death, it would still belong to his times. The glory of Athelstan must have been a more living, a more immediate reality and occasion for such a poem before, than after, the middle of the tenth century.

William of Malmesbury's scholarship and knowledge of books, his specific statement that he had read in an ancient volume this Latin poem about Athelstan, his detailed summary of its contents, his quotation of sixty-three lines of its actual verse, his attribution of the poem to the tenth century, its own contemporary character as a panegyric, its glorification of Athelstan's victory of 937, are sound reasons for believing in the existence and antiquity of the poem itself; its acceptance by such recent, authoritative students of the period as the late Dean Robinson, Professor Stenton, and Mr. Alistair Campbell, should leave us in no further doubt. Despite William's somewhat supercilious condemnation of its style, he evidently regarded it, as his learned editor remarked (II, lxi), as "something of a treasure," and well worth the space devoted to it. Stubbs himself fully accepted the poem as the authentic source of William's account.

We shall find other reasons, in the Gift Story itself, for believing in a tenth-century date, but this section on the panegyric as a whole may well be concluded by emphasizing the fact that it was precisely in Malmesbury Abbey that the poem had the best chance of survival and of William's reading it. Books from the seventh-century library of St. Aldhelm, first abbot of Malmesbury,

⁸ Athelstan's death is now dated 939. Cf. Beaven, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, XXXII (1917), p. 517; Robinson, p. 27; Campbell, p. 50, n. 3.

⁹ Campbell traces the history of Anlaf Guthfrithson (pp. 46-50) and of Anlaf Sihtricson (pp. 46, 51-52), with whom the former was sometimes confused.

were still there in William's own day and, as M. R. James¹⁰ has shown, were used by the historian. Less ancient, but still venerable enough to excite interest, would have been the volume in which William read the Athelstan poem. Though his is now the only record of it, it is still far from belonging to that "lost literature" of mediaeval England of which, from brief quotations of one or two surviving lines, or from mere chance allusions, the late R. W. Chambers and Professor R. M. Wilson have been able to gather such large evidence.¹¹ In view of the deeply troubled times that came to England in the eleventh century, when twice she experienced the woe of foreign conquest, it is not surprising that no one again copied the panegyric to a king who had died in 939. The poem slept quietly in the archives of Malmesbury Abbey until a Malmesbury historian gave it new life.

THE FRENCH GIFTS TO ATHELSTAN

After briefly describing the marriages of three of Athelstan's sisters, the poem told of the fourth sister and of the embassy sent by Hugh of France when, with great gifts, he sought her hand in marriage:

Quartam, in qua omne coagulum pulchritudinis, quod ceterae pro parte habent, naturaliter confluerat, Hugo rex Francorum¹² per nuntios a germano expetiit. Princeps hujusce legationis fuit Adulfus, filius Baldewini comitis Flandriæ, ex filia regis Edwardi Ethelswitha. Is, cum in conventu procerum apud Abbandunam proci postulata exposuisset, protulit munera sane amplississima, et quæ cujuslibet

¹⁰ James, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-15; J. W. Thompson, *The Medieval Library* (Chicago, 1939), p. 306.

¹¹ R. W. Chambers, "The Lost Literature of Medieval England," *The Library*, 4th series, N. 4 (1925), pp. 293-321; R. M. Wilson, "Lost Literature in Old Middle English," *Leeds Studies in English*, II (1933), pp. 14-37; VI (1937), 30-49. Neither scholar mentions the panegyric; both are concerned primarily with vernacular literature.

¹² Stubbs, *GRA*, I, 150; II, lxiv, noted William's confusion here and in an earlier passage (I, 139), of Hugh the Great (d. 956) with his son, King Hugh Capet (987-996). For the history of Hugh the Great see Ph. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul de Bourgogne, Rois de France, 923-936* (Paris, 1910) Index, *Hugues le Grand*, especially pp. 11, 80, for Hugh's failure in 923 and 936 to get the crown, and p. 45, for his marriage to Eadhild. Cf. Stenton, *op. cit.*, pp. 340-342. In William's three retellings of the marriages of Athelstan's sisters (*GRA*, I, 116 f., 139, 149 f.), it is evident he made use, not only of the panegyric, but of other sources. Cf. Stubbs, II, lii-liv.

avarissimi cupiditatem incunctanter explerent; odores aromatum qualia nunquam antea in Anglia visa fuerant; honores gemmarum, præsertim smaragdorum, in quorum viriditate sol repercussos oculos astantium gratiosa luce animaret equos cursores, plurimos, cum phaleris, fulvum, ut Maro ait, "mandentes sub dentibus aurum;"¹³ vas quoddam ex onichino, ita subtili cælatoris arte sculptum, ut vere fluctuare segetes, vere gemmare vites, vere moveri hominum imagines viderentur; ita lucidum et politum ut vice speculi vultus intuentium æmularetur;¹⁴ ense Constantini magni, in quo litteris aureis nomen antiqui possessoris legebatur;¹⁵ in capulo quoque super crassas auri laminas clavum ferreum affixum cernereres, unum ex quatuor quos Judaica factio Dominici corporis aptarat supplicio: lanceam Caroli magni, quam imperator invictissimus, contra Saracenos exercitum ducens, siquando in hostem vibrabat, nunquam nisi victor abibat; ferebatur eadem esse quæ, Dominico lateri centurionis manu impacta, pretiosi vulneris hiatu Paradisum miseris mortalibus aperuit: vexillum Mauricii beatissimi martyris, et Thebææ legionis principis, quo idem rex

¹³ Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, VII, 279. F. J. E. Raby, "Some Notes on Virgil, Mainly in English Authors in the Middle Ages," *Studi Medievali*, Nuova Serie, V (1932), pp. 359-371, neither notes this reference nor says anything of the Virgilian influence in the verses quoted by William. But the coronation feast for Athelstan has reminiscences of Dido's feast for Aeneas (*Aeneid*, I, vv. 697-756). There seems also, as Dr. Edith Claffin kindly pointed out to me, palpable imitation of Virgil's famous line (VIII, v. 596) beginning with a rare poetic word ("Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum") in that of the Anglo-Latin poet who ended his line (*GRA*, I, 152, v. 6) with the same word ("Innumerabilium concursus quadrupedantum").

¹⁴ It is of interest to compare this vase, obviously of classical and not mediaeval origin, with the beautiful sardonyx cup now in the Cabinet des Médailles (E. C. Badelon, *Cat. des Camées antiques et modernes de la Bibl. Nat.* [Paris, 1897], pp. 201 ff., No. 366, Pl. xliii). In a distich in Suger's manner, the gift of this to St. Denis was attributed to Charles the Bald, grandson of Charlemagne. Cf. Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and Its Art Treasures* (Princeton, 1946), p. 202, Fig. 22. On its polished surface, as on the "vas ex onichino" of the panegyric, grape-vines seem to bud and there are life-like human heads, though no complete figures of men.

¹⁵ Cf. this account of the sword of Constantine the Great with a Nail of the Passion inset by plates of gold in the hilt, with the description of the spear of Constantine in the *Antapodosis* (Tit-for-Tat), Bk IV, c. 25, of Bishop Liudprand of Cremona (920-972): "At the raised part in the middle [of the spearhead], there are crosses made from the nails that once pierced the hands and feet of Our Lord Jesus Christ." Translated from *The Works of Liudprand* by F. A. Wright (London, 1939), p. 160. This was the invincible weapon which was surrendered perforce by Rudolph of Burgundy to Henry the Fowler, passed on to his son, Otto I, and became (though probably in some substitute form) the holy royal lance of German kings. See below, notes 32-33. On the sword and lance of Constantine, see A. Graf, *Roma nella memoria . . . del medio evo* (Turin, 1883), I, 18-20; II, 464-469. See below, n. 32.

in bello Hispano quamlibet infestos et confertos inimicorum cuneos dirumpere, et in fugam solitus erat cogere: diadema ex auro quidem multo, sed magis gemmis pretiosum, quarum splendor ita in intuentes faculas luminis jaculabatur, ut quanto quis certaret visum intendere, tanto magis reverberatus cogeretur cedere: particulam sanctæ et adorandæ crucis crystallo inclusam, ubi soliditatem lapidis oculus penetrans potest discernere qualis sit ligni color, et quæ quantitas: portiunculam quoque coronæ spineæ, eodem modo inclusam, quam, ad derisionem regni, militaris rabies sacrosancto imposuit capiti. His tantis et tam elaboratis donis magnificentissimus rex gavisus, non minoribus pene respondit beneficiis, quin et anhelantis animum nuptiis sororis refecit. Et ceteris quidem successores reges ditavit; partem vero crucis et coronæ Malmesbiriæ delegavit, quorum sustentaculo adhuc credo vigere locum¹⁶ (*GRA*, I, 149-51, §135).

The gifts sent by Duke Hugh, to give him his proper title, were royal indeed! Costly enough were those enchanting Eastern perfumes, those gleaming emeralds, the golden, jewelled crown, the fleet horses with golden bits, and the exquisite vase which must have been fashioned in classical antiquity since its carvings were of no mediaeval type. But beyond all price were the holy relics,¹⁷ relics of the Passion itself—the Spear said to have pierced Christ's side, bits of the Cross, of the Crown of Thorns, the sword of Constantine inset with one of the four nails used for the Crucifixion—and that “vexillum” of St. Mauricius which was listed immediately after the Passion Spear as having only less value. These last two relics were said to have belonged to Charlemagne. We may recall the observation made by Buckler¹⁸ in his study of

¹⁶ The Gift Story is briefly referred to in William's *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* (ed. N. E. Hamilton, Rolls Series, LII, London, 1870), 397. The *Gesta Pontificum* is full of references to Athelstan's gifts to churches and monasteries. Athelstan's epitaph (p. 397) begins, “Hic jacet orbis honor patriae dolor, orbita recti.” This is plainly related to the “patriae decus, orbita recti,” of the first verse quotation from the panegyric given above. It is difficult to say whether the poem, with its allusion to Athelstan's death, or the epitaph came first. Epitaphs do not always coincide with deaths.

¹⁷ The holy relics of William's Gift Story were briefly mentioned by H. M. Gillett, *The Story of the Relics of Passion* (Oxford, 1935), p. 102; also by Urban T. Holmes, Jr., “The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* and William of Malmesbury,” *Symposium*, I (November, 1946), pp. 75-81. The latter had nothing to say concerning the origins of William's story save: “It seems clear to me that William found somewhere in England material comparable to what is in the *Descriptio* of St. Denis and in the *Pèlerinage*.” See below, notes 28-29, 36, 37, 63.

¹⁸ F. M. Buckler, *Harunu'l-Rashid and Charles the Great* (Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1931), p. 42. Among the gifts subsequently given by

Haroun al-Raschid and Charlemagne: "After the break-up of the Carolingian Empire in 888, it seems probable that its collection of Oriental treasures fell into the hands of the dukes of France, and that in 924 (?) . . . Duke Hugh sent a large part of the collection to the English king." We may also note that in 923, at the battle of Soissons, Duke Hugh greatly aided in the overthrow of Charles the Simple and the Carolingian dynasty.¹⁹ From 923 until 936 when Hugh, for his own purposes, recalled from England Charles's son, Louis IV d'Outremer, to set the boy on the throne of France,²⁰ the duke was as anti-Carolingian as possible. Within that period, presumably, relics with Carolingian associations would have had for him chiefly an export value.

Not only, therefore, does the historical situation seem to explain the panegyric's report that Carolingian treasures were sent out of France, but we find in the fame of Athelstan motivation for the gift itself. More than one tenth-century poet was imbued with the idea of describing Athelstan as "an English Charlemagne." Another poet of the period, likewise eulogizing the king in Latin, made use of a poem originally addressed to Charlemagne himself.²¹ The panegyric summarized by William was strongly influenced by Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni Imperatoris*,²² the famous work which had set a pattern from which subsequent biographies of great kings could hardly escape. In the Anglo-Latin poem as in the *Vita*, there is the same emphasis on family relationships, on victorious wars, on the gifts and tributes of other rulers, on great works of construction, on the manners and appearance of the hero, and, above all, for our

Athelstan to Durham were seven "pallia." Fragments of one, used as a shroud for St. Cuthbert, when examined in 1827, showed its eastern origin by its design and interwoven Kufic script.

¹⁹ See above, n. 12; Lauer, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

²⁰ P. Lauer, *Le Règne de Louis IV d'Outremer* (Paris, 1900), p. 9, for the flight to England of Louis and his mother, King Athelstan's sister; pp. 11-12, for the embassy sent there to recall Louis (a boy of fifteen) to the French throne. Cf. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 342.

²¹ W. L. Stevenson, "A Latin poem addressed to King Athelstan," *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, XXVI (1911), 482-487. The poem was a greeting from some oversea poet who knew of the defeat of Sihtric of Northumbria in 926; it seems to have been written after 928, when Bishop Cenwald of Worcester visited German monasteries and probably made known some details of Athelstan's triumphs. Stevenson dated the manuscript (Cotton Nero A ii, f. 8v) in the middle of the tenth century; Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 68, in the early eleventh century. I owe to Professor Ronald Walpole the phrase describing Athelstan as "an English Charlemagne."

²² Eginhard, *La Vie de Charlemagne* (éd. et trad. L. Halphen, Paris, 1923).

present interest, on his piety. Charlemagne had great reverence for the holy places of Jerusalem; he was a great collector, a great giver of holy relics. We know of these matters not only from Einhard²³ but also from Angilbert, abbot of St. Riquier (790-814), the revered friend to whom Charlemagne sent many relics. They had been brought from far places, even from Jerusalem and Constantinople; they included even such mementos of the Passion as "de ligno Domini" and "de clavis unde crucifixus est."²⁴ The traditions in France of Charlemagne's numerous foundations of churches and abbeys, of his gifts to them of holy relics, were ancient and widespread.²⁵ Similar traditions existed in England concerning Athelstan; in the fourteen years of his reign (925-939), he achieved undying glory in clerical eyes through like services to the Church. The fame of Athelstan's piety, of his zeal as a collector of holy things,²⁶ would have been fully known to his panegyrist. Even in 926, however, the devout king would have been known to Duke Hugh as one for whom the fragments of the Passion Relics would be supremely precious. The unscrupulous Hugh would have had no compunction about sending them out of France. Most of them, the Cross, the Nails, the Thorns, had, according to mediaeval belief, as we must remember, the curious faculty of multiplying themselves.²⁷

THE RELICS OWNED BY CHARLEMAGNE: THE LANCE OF LONGINUS AND THE VEXILLUM OF ST. MAURICIUS

The statement by the author of the Gift Story that two of the relics sent to Athelstan had once belonged to Charlemagne,

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80.

²⁴ Hariulf, *Chronique de Saint-Riquier* (ed. Ferdinand Lot, Paris, 1894), pp. 62-63. See also Joseph Bédier, *Les Légendes Épiques* (3rd ed., Paris, 1929), IV, 128, n. 3.

²⁵ Cf. Bédier, IV, 124, 129, 132-134, 145, 151, 157, 164, for some of Charlemagne's real or alleged donations. See also L. A. Vigneras, "L'Abbaye de Charroux et le Légende du Pèlerinage de Charlemagne," *Romanic Review*, XXXII (1941), 121-128, for supposed gifts to the abbey.

²⁶ See above, n. 16; also Robinson, *Times of St. Dunstan*, *passim*, pp. 59-90, for Athelstan's gifts to Canterbury, Glastonbury, Malmesbury, Abingdon, Westminster, Milton Abbey (Dorset), Durham, etc.

²⁷ J. A. MacCulloch, *Medieval Faith and Fable* (London, 1932), p. 140: "Paulinus (*Ep.* 31) says that part of the Cross at Jerusalem gave off fragments without diminishing. . . . The Nails of the Cross had the same power of reproducing themselves." MacCulloch's whole chapter (IX) on relics is full of valuable information. He did not, however, mention Athelstan's holy relics.

was obviously intended to glorify the English king. He was to possess the same invincible spear Charles had used against the Saracens, the spear said to have pierced Christ's side; also the "vexillum S. Mauricii" which Charles had used in the Spanish war. Both Saracens and the Spanish war had been mentioned by Einhard, though he had made no reference to these famous relics. To each of them modern scholars have devoted extensive investigations. But with the possible exception of the *Chanson de Roland*, no text referring to Charlemagne's alleged ownership of either relic and antedating William's account, has yet been cited. His version has been considered, in such studies, as simply a twelfth century account.²⁸ His own reference to his tenth century source, his editor's careful comments on it, have alike been ignored. For two of the more important discussions of these relics we may turn to De Mély and Hofmeister.

In his *Reliques de Constantinople*, Fernand de Mély studied²⁹ at length the early references to the Lance of Longinus and attempted to trace the history of the relics most commonly associated with it. He quoted William's Gift Story and remarked on its form—"un peu littéraire, on pourrait même dire poétique"—a discerning remark since he had not read William's remarks on his source. He rejected as an interpolation the story's identification of Charlemagne's spear with that of Longinus since this was not found in the same story as told by Ingulf. De Mély was unaware of the conclusions of English historians that Ingulf's

²⁸ See above, n. 17. Gaston Paris, *Histoire Poétique de Charlemagne* (2d ed., Paris, 1900), p. 374, spoke only of William's own text concerning Charlemagne's lance. St. Denis near Paris claimed to possess this lance but did not identify it with the Passion Lance. Cf. Bédier, *Légendes Épiques*, IV, 174. Karl Burdach, *Der Graal* (Stuttgart, 1938), made a notable contribution to the history of Longinus and his lance, but merely mentioned (p. 446) William's Gift Story and found no other allusion to Charlemagne's possession of the Passion Lance save that in the thirteenth-century *Karlsmagnus Saga*. As J. Coulet, *Études sur . . . le Voyage de Charlemagne en Orient* (Montpellier, 1907), p. 135, showed long ago, this passage was taken directly from the Oxford *Chanson de Roland* and not, as Burdach thought, from a lost *chanson de geste* of the eleventh century. See below, n. 37.

²⁹ *Revue de l'Art Chrétien*, XLVII (1897), 1-11; the Holy Lance, Jerusalem-Rome relic; pp. 120-127, the Lance of Antioch; pp. 287-302, the St. Maurice Lance of Germany and Cracow. These articles were reprinted under De Mély's own name in a third volume (Paris, 1904) which continued and had the same title as Count Paul Riant's *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (2 vols., Geneva, 1877). For De Mély's discussion of William's story and what he wrongly took to be an independent Abingdon tradition, see the *Revue*, pp. 298-301; *Exuviae*, pp. 88-95. Cf. *Chronica de Abingdon* (ed. Jos. Stevenson, 2 vols., Rolls Series), I, 88; II, 276-277. See below, n. 78.

work was a forgery of the fourteenth century.³⁰ His own conclusions about the spear or *vexillum* of St. Mauricius in part anticipated Hofmeister's as given below. De Mély thought an independent tradition about the relics was to be found in documents of Abingdon Abbey; in point of fact these documents merely appropriated the substance, sometimes the very words, of William's account. De Mély's earnest search in records of the English regalia and elsewhere for some trace of Athelstan's donation, brought no result. Almost sadly, he queried, "Où est la lance?"

Hofmeister's *Die heilige Lanze*³¹ gave a substantial historical study of the holy lance that became a part of the regalia of German kings and emperors. He considered with care the description (here quoted in note¹⁵) written by Liudprand of Cremona before 972; it told of the Lance of Constantine, in which had been incorporated Nails of the Passion. Hofmeister dated the acquisition of this lance by Henry the Fowler in 926, but did not believe that it was the same object but a substitute, that was known, from the early eleventh century, as the Lance of St. Mauricius.³² Under Henry II (1002-1024) of Germany, St. Mauricius became the patron saint of the Holy Roman Empire; late in the eleventh century, what modern scholarship has recognized as one of the most venerable relics of that empire, the lancehead until recently preserved at Vienna, received the silver label affixed to the lance "ad confirmationem Clavi DNI et Lancee Sancti Mauricii."³³ Neither Hofmeister nor the later German scholars

³⁰ Cf. Charles Gross, *Sources and Literature of English History* (2d ed., London and New York, 1915), p. 247.

³¹ A. Hofmeister, *Die heilige Lanze, ein Abzeichen des alten Reichs in Untersuchungen zur deutschen Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte*, Heft XCVI (Breslau, 1908).

³² Hofmeister, ch. I, on the lance as an ancient investiture symbol; ch. II, on the Lance of Constantine and its acquisition by Henry the Fowler; ch. III, on its form and the Viennese relic known as the lance of St. Mauricius; ch. IX, on the German royal lance as a Mauricius lance. Cf. R. Poupardin, *Le Royaume de Bourgogne, 888-1038* (Paris, 1907), ch. II, on the surrender of the Burgundian lance to Henry the Fowler. This is variously dated between 920-926, 929, but Hofmeister's argument (p. 17) seems convincing for dating it in 926. This date is strongly supported by R. L. Poole, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, XXX (1915), 51-52. Walther Holtzmann's *König Heinrich I und die heilige Lanze* (Bonn, 1947) has been inaccessible to me. Mr. G. Edwards, of the London Institute of Historical Research, to whom I owe the reference, pronounces it "recent and excellent."

³³ Hofmeister, pp. 54, 64-66. Cf. A. Weixlgärtner, *Geschichte im Widerschein der Reichskleinodien* (Vienna, 1938); also his *Guide to the Welf Schatzkammer, Treasury of the Former Imperial House of Austria, Secular Part* (Vienna, 1933), p.46. Francis Laking, *Record of European Armour* (London, 1920), I, 26, describes

These well-known lines in the Oxford manuscript (Digby 23) of the *Chanson de Roland* have frequently been discussed as a means of dating the poem itself.³⁷ But whether they indicate a date before or after 1098 when, according to chroniclers of the First Crusade, the holy Lancehead was found at Antioch, they were certainly composed long after the panegyric to Athelstan. Yet it is possible that the *Chanson de Roland*, in mentioning only *la more*, the extremity or tip of the Lance, was more true to an original French tradition than was the Athelstan poem which spoke apparently of the Lance as a whole. In a record which has been strangely neglected, there is noted the gift by Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious (d. 840), of the tip of the Passion Lance to St. Riquier, the great monastery in the valley of the Somme. It had attained notable fame under that Abbot Angilbert, to whom, as already observed, Charlemagne himself sent many relics. The Chronicle of St. Riquier was compiled by Hariulf, one of its monks, who finished the first four books, according to his own statement, in 1088. For them he used and sometimes quoted much older sources. They have been carefully indicated by Ferdinand Lot in his admirable edition of the Chronicle.³⁸ Yet even he paid no special attention to the fact that in telling of the relics supposed to have been given by Louis the Pious and later carried away from St. Riquier, Hariulf twice referred to two relics connected with Our Lord:³⁹

caligulam Domini Christi
 summitatem acuminis lanceæ, qua ejusdem Domini latus fuit
 apertum.

There are inaccuracies in Hariulf's account—whether of his own making or of his source, we cannot be sure. Jeremiah, the monk and treasurer of St. Riquier, who was said to have carried these and other relics to Sens to preserve them from the pagans

³⁷ *La Chanson de Roland publiée d'après le manuscrit d'Oxford et traduit par Joseph Bédier* (Paris, 1928); also Bédier's *La Chanson de Roland commentée* (Paris, 192), pp. 42-43.

³⁸ Hariulf, *Chronique de Saint-Riquier* (ed. Lot), pp. xvi-xxxix, for sources; for the date of the Chronicle, pp. xvii, 283-294. Cf. A. Molinier, *Les Sources de l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1902), I², p. 44, No. 1140.

³⁹ Hariulf, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 142. On this last page the "latus fuit apertum" is followed by "unde etiam Ecclesiae sacramenta fluxerunt." Cf. Rabanus Maurus, Abbot of Fulda, (822-842), *De Universo* (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXI, 539: "Lancea enim potest significare dolorem, vel sacramentorum apertionem; . . . Et in passionem Domini 'unus militum lancea latus ejus aperuit, et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua (John, xix).'"

then ravaging Ponthieu (878-882), was identified with an earlier Jeremiah, archbishop of Sens in 818-827. King Louis was said to have gone to Constantinople himself, instead of merely getting relics brought from there. But Lot,⁴⁰ who pointed out these errors, had no doubt whatever that in the story as a whole Hariulf was drawing on a now lost *Translatio* of the monk Jeremiah which told of Jeremiah's preparations for his journey, of how at Sens he placed the relics in the monastery of Ste. Colombe, of how at last he became archbishop of Sens, and of his transference of the relics to his new church, St. Étienne. Aside from the mistakes noted above, there seems no reason to doubt that this was a more or less true story and that the ninth century *Translatio* did once exist. Its statement that the point of the Passion Lance had once belonged to Charlemagne's son, can hardly be unrelated to the idea in the *Chanson de Roland* that the same point had once belonged to the emperor. The *Translatio* may have been the ultimate source of this Carolingian tradition; in its mention of Sens, it may give us a further clue. For it was by an archbishop of Sens, Gautier by name, that in 923 Raoul was crowned king after the overthrow of Charlemagne's descendant, Charles the Simple.⁴¹ It must be inferred that at the time Gautier was as anti-Carolingian in sentiment as was Duke Hugh, who had played so large a part in Charles's defeat. In 926, when Duke Hugh wished to send to Athelstan the most precious of French holy relics, would Gautier have had the power or the will to resist him,⁴² especially in the case of the two with Carolingian associations? In France for obvious reasons nothing would have been said of their going; in England no questions would have been asked about gifts that came from the all-powerful duke.

The *Translatio* of Jeremiah told of the bringing to Sens late in the tenth century of the tip of the Passion Lance; political circumstance in 923 would explain how and why Duke Hugh may have acquired it; the tenth-century panegyric on Athelstan

⁴⁰ For Jeremiah and the relics taken by him to Sens, see Hariulf, op. cit., pp. xxviii, 141-142. On p. xxviii, n. 1. Lot remarked that a similar ninth century list of relics at St. Riquier was published by Berger, *Revue de l'Orient Latin*, I (1893), 468 ff. This list mentioned the *caligulam* but not the *lanceam*.

⁴¹ Lauer, *Robert Ier*, p. 12.

⁴² Lauer, *Louis IV d'Outremer*, pp. 11-12, noted that William, Archbishop of Sens, was included in the important embassy sent in 936 to England when Duke Hugh decided to bring back to the throne of France the Carolingian prince Louis. It would seem as if the prelates of Sens between 925-936 were in singular accord with the changes in Duke Hugh's political sympathies.

and certain later documents, to be examined presently, testify to the presence of such a relic in England from 926 through a good part of the eleventh century. In Sens itself, however, we find no record of such a relic, no knowledge of Jeremiah's story, until much later. Not until the early twelfth century, was it retold, on the basis of Hariulf's version, by Clarius,⁴³ the chronicler of Sens, and again, late in the thirteenth century, by Geoffroy de Courlon.⁴⁴ Not until the relic list of 1293, which Geoffroy included in his *Livre des Reliques de l'Abbaye de St. Pierre-le-Vif*,⁴⁵ do we find any other mention of the Holy Lance as a Sens relic. In these later chronicles, both emanating from Sens, the claim is made that Charlemagne himself had originally given the relics to St. Riquier. In the eleventh century Jeremiah's story seems to have been known only at his own monastery of St. Riquier, and to have been retold only by Hariulf. The absence of an allusion to it at Sens, before Clarius took the story from Hariulf, suggests at least that at Sens, in the earlier period, the story may have been deliberately suppressed. In the tenth century the story, if known, would surely have required some difficult explaining. How had a relic of such supreme importance, a relic that had only been acquired in the ninth century, disappeared from Sens?

The second of the Carolingian relics sent to Athelstan was the *vexillum* of St. Mauricius, the famous soldier saint who had been martyred, so his legend said, with over six thousand companions of the Theban Legion (*ca.* 303).⁴⁶ To Agaunum, to the basilica and monastery built and rebuilt on the site of that martyrdom, a place known to us today as the world famous sport center of St. Moritz (St. Maurice-en-Valais), came in the early Middle Ages an endless stream of pilgrims; from it they took an

⁴³ Hariulf, *op. cit.*, pp. lv-lvi; for Clarius see L. Duru, *Bibliothèque Historique de l'Yonne* (Auxerre, 1850-1863), II, 470: "Hieremias . . . accipiens corpora sanctorum cum pluribus reliquiis, quas Karolus Magnus illic asportaverat ex multis regionibus . . . detulit eas Senones in basilicam Sanctae Columbae, tempore Magni archiepiscopi. . . . Ordinatus autem, transtulit reliquias in ecclesiam Sancti-Stefani quas detulerit de Sancto-Richerio."

⁴⁴ *Le Chronique de l'Abbaye de Saint-Pierre-le-Vif par Geoffroy de Courlon* (ed. G. Julliot, Sens, 1876, p. 278. Geoffroy's account of Jeremiah is almost identical with that of Clarius.

⁴⁵ *Le Livre des Reliques* (ed. G. Julliot and M. Prou, Sens, 1887), pp. 3, 8, "de Lancea, de Lancea Domini et Longino" (sic).

⁴⁶ For articles on Agaunum and the legend of St. Maurice and the Theban martyrs, see Leclercq in Cabrol's *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris, 1907), I, 850-871; X (1932), 2699-2729, with bibliography.

endless supply of relics.⁴⁷ Charlemagne himself, like most people using the Great Saint Bernard Pass, probably stayed there; he certainly referred to it in authentic records for 775 and 804.⁴⁸ Though accounts of the gifts he gave to Agaunum and of the relics he obtained there are mostly late and probably fraudulent,⁴⁹ we have, again from Sens, evidence that Maurician relics were treasured there in Charlemagne's time. This evidence is unquestionable; it comes from ancient labels written for relics now lost. Of these labels, 157 are still preserved in the archives of the cathedral of St. Étienne; so also is the original document of the *procès-verbal* of 1192, in which Archbishop Gui de Noyers listed the cathedral's extant relics.⁵⁰ Four of these labels (No. 94, in cursive Merovingian script; No. 96, in ninth-century minuscule; No. 97, in Merovingian script; No. 133, in minuscule of 809, the year in which the parchment is dated) refer to Maurician relics, and all clearly antedate the tenth century. These labels were certainly known to Gui de Noyers and probably in part inspired his elaborated statement that many of the cathedral relics had been given by Charlemagne to Archbishop Magnus in 809, that they had been placed by him in a silver shrine, that the shrine had been replaced in 1095 by Archbishop Richer, and that the place where the relics had been kept had long been known as the Chapel of Charlemagne. Whatever the truth of these remarks, the label of 809 survives to associate the Maurician relics it lists with "anno VIII imperii domini Caroli et anno XII episcopatus Magnoni." So far as Sens is concerned, it is evident that in 926, Duke Hugh might have found Maurician relics there.

There are other indications of the cult of this saint in Caro-

⁴⁷ A. Stuckelberg, "Geschichte der Reliquien in der Schweiz," *Schriften der Schweizer. Gesellschaft für Volkskunde*, I (1902), gives a long chronological list of visitors to Agaunum and of relics taken from there. See pp. 4, 309, for relics taken to Sens; p. 5, to St. Riquier p. 7, to Auxerre; p. 12, to Gembloux.

⁴⁸ J. Böhmer, *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern, 751-918*, ed. E. Mühlbacher (2d ed., Innsbruck, 1899), I, 81 (No. 187); 183 (No. 407a).

⁴⁹ Cf. E. Aubert, *Trésor de l'Abbaye de Saint-Maurice d'Agaune* (Paris, 1872), pp. 28-29, 207-209. The documents cited by him are not acceptable. Cf. S. Abel, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reiches, 768-788* (2d ed. B. Simson, Leipzig, 1888, I, p. 552.

⁵⁰ Maurice Prou and E. Chartraire, "Authentiques conservées au trésor de la cathédrale de Sens," *Bulletin et Mémoires de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France, Mémoires*, Ser. 6 (Paris, 1900), IX, 129-172. Plates VII, VIII, give photographic facsimiles of the labels here mentioned; for the text, pp. 156-157, 164-165. For the *procès-verbal* see p. 131, n. 3; 134 ff.; for its statements about Charlemagne's gifts see p. 140.

lingian France. Two of Charlemagne's closest friends paid St. Mauricius special veneration. Alcuin,⁵¹ the learned Englishman, for some still unidentified church once wrote:

Hæc loca Mauritius meritis vivacibus ornet
Egregius martyr cum legione sua . . .

The other friend, the notable Abbot Angilbert of St. Riquier, spoke in his own *Libellus* of the chapel of St. Mauricius in his abbey, and gave directions for the special procession that was to honor the saint's day (22 September). Since we know that Charlemagne passed the Easter of 800 at St. Riquier,⁵² it is probable that he too once walked "ad sanctum Mauricium." In his time there were at St. Riquier, as at Sens, various relics of the Theban martyrs.⁵³

Besides these allusions of Alcuin and Angilbert to St. Mauricius, it is of notable interest to find that he was invoked in those triumphant liturgical acclamations, the *Laudes Regiae*, to which Professor Kantorowicz has recently drawn attention. The name of Mauricius appears in the two oldest Carolingian *Laudes* known to us. They date from between 784 and 800.⁵⁴

Of great importance, likewise, are the sacramentaries in which, thanks to the detailed descriptions by Abbé Leroquais, we can follow, in rather closely dated manuscripts, something of the fluctuations in the cult of Mauricius and other saints. We find, for instance, in eleven sacramentaries of French origin from

⁵¹ For Alcuin, see J. von Schlosser, *Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der karolingischen Kunst* (Vienna, 1892), Neue Folge, IV, No. 873, § 18. For other references to the Theban martyrs, see p. 106, 254, 260, 895, 897.

⁵² Böhmer-Mühlbacher, *Die Regesten*, p. 159. Cf. Hariulf's *Chronique* (ed. Lot), p. 77, n. 1; for Angilbert and Charlemagne, pp. 71, 298, 306.

⁵³ In Angilbert's own *Libellus* (Hariulf's *Chronique*, ed. Lot, p. 59, 65) unspecified relics of the Theban martyrs are listed.

⁵⁴ E. H. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae, a Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley, California, 1946), p. 15, quoted the *Laudes* from MS Lat. 13159 (Paris, Bibl. Nat.), f. 163v, and named seven other printings of this important text. St. Mauricius was the twenty-second among the saints invoked. Unfortunately, in his description of this Gallican Psalter in which the *Laudes* appear, V. Leroquais, *Les Psautiers, Mss Latins* (Macon, 1940-1941), II, 113, gave only the first nineteen of these saints. He, like other scholars, dated it between 795 and 800. Cf. also Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie et de liturgie*, VIII (1929), col. 1902 à 1903, for date and text. The oldest text of a *Laudes* invoking St. Mauricius is found in a Montpellier MS, 409, f. 344. This is quoted by Leroquais, *Psautiers*, I, 275, and dated by him (p. 277) between 784-794. See also Kantorowicz (p. 33), who remarked on "St. Maurice as a Burgundian soldier saint, Frankish by adoption." Transjuran Burgundy in 888 included Agaunum, site of the martyrdom of St. Maurice.

the ninth and tenth centuries, the name of St. Mauricius, but in only four from the eleventh century.⁵⁵ Perhaps the full appropriation of this saint by Germany in the eleventh century, accounted for some contemporary decline of his cult in France. After 1000 it would have been unlikely that anyone would have invented the idea that his *vexillum* had belonged to Charlemagne. But the idea might easily have originated at an earlier date in places like St. Riquier or at Sens, where, in Charlemagne's own time, relics of St. Mauricius and his fellow Theban martyrs were treasured. It must have been a tradition originating in France that first associated his *vexillum* with the emperor and transmitted the same association to the Athelstan poem.

The standard of Mauricius as commander of a Roman legion must have differed greatly from any mediaeval concept of it. As Du Cange's⁵⁶ Glossary shows, the mediaeval *vexillum* might mean several things. In the oldest Christian poetry, the *vexillum Christi* meant the Cross; in much later times the *vexilla* of saints, nations, lords, prelates, monasteries, etc., were commonly banners on lances. From the thirteenth century on, there are allusions to the *vexillum* or *l'ensene* or *l'oriflor de Saint Morise* as a banner.⁵⁷ In most mediaeval representations, none of which antedate the mid-twelfth century, the saint bears a bannered lance; in three, the lance alone.⁵⁸ Erdmann⁵⁹ has shown that before monks began

⁵⁵ Victor Leroquais, *Les Sacramentaires et les missels manuscrits* (Paris, 1924): ninth century, St. Thierry, I, 24; Corbie, I, 25, 29; St. Denis (MS sent to Nonantola), I, 29 (see also A. M. Friend, *Speculum*, I [1926], 59-70, who identified and dated both this manuscript, Paris, B.N. MS Lat. 2292, and MS Lat. 1141, as coming from St. Denis before 876); St. Amand I, 58; Tours, I, 46-47, 50, 52-54; ninth to tenth century, Cambrai, I, 13; tenth century, Corbie, I, 25; St. Denis, I, 65; Angers, I, 73; Chartres, I, 78; St. Vaast, I, 81; eleventh century, Senlis, I, 33; Compiègne, I, 117; St. Wandrille, I, 135; St. Denis, I, 144.

⁵⁶ Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* (ed. G. A. Henschel, Paris, 1840-1850), *Vexillum*, p. 300.

⁵⁷ Herzberg, op. cit. (see above, n. 35), pp. 81-82. For the French allusions cited above, see *Aspremont* (ed. L. Brandin, Paris, 1924), vv. 3912, 4045.

⁵⁸ Of the thirteen representations of St. Mauricius given by Herzberg (cf. p. 124), only two (Nos. 2 and 11), both of the thirteenth century, show him with an unbannered lance. But to these may be added the thirteenth-century miniature given by A. Schultz, *Höfisches Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger* (Leipzig, 1889), II, 57, Fig. 35. The earliest representation of St. Mauricius, unnoted by Herzberg, appears on a reliquary chest. Cf. Jos. Braun, *Meisterwerke der deutschen Goldschmiedekunst der vorgotischen Zeit* (Munich, 1922), I, 9, Fig. 45. Braun dated this in the twelfth century (cf. also his *Die Reliquaire des christlichen Kultus* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1940), p. 160, No. 22. Professor Meyer Schapiro, to whom I am indebted for this reference, dates the chest in the mid-twelfth century.

⁵⁹ Carl Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* (Stuttgart, 1933),

to carry banners into battle, they carried the Cross or some other holy relic. German scholars have established the lance of St. Mauricius as his most famous relic, but in what they regard as the earliest known allusion to it, they have not noted an equation between the words *lancea* and *vexillum*. The allusion occurs in a protesting letter sent by Bruno of Querfurt to Henry II of Germany during the latter's wars with Boleslav the Brave of Poland: "Bonumne est persequi christianum et habere in amicitia populum paganum? Quomodo conveniunt Zuarasi vel diabolus et dux sanctorum vester et noster Mauritius? Qua fronte coeunt sacra lancea et, que pascuntur humano sanguine, diabolica vexilla?"

As Hofmeister⁶⁰ remarked in quoting this passage, for Bruno the lance and the saint were already associated. We may surmise that the *vexilla* which fed on human blood and were deliberately contrasted with the *sacra lancea* were also, like it, not banners but lances. Was the term suggested by some earlier lost reference to the *vexillum S. Mauricii*, such as actually appears in the tenth-century panegyric to Athelstan? It is not without interest that in England, the home of that poem, as late as the mid-fourteenth century and in spite of the usual interpretation of "vexillum" as banner or flag, we find the *vexillum S. Mauricii* identified with a lance. In the Latin *Chronicon* (ca 1366) of Henry Knighton of Leicestershire, the author makes a surprising combination of William's Gift Story with the romance of *Guy of Warwick*.⁶¹ Athelstan receives the gifts from Hugh, the *vexillum* among them. Later on, at the king's request, Guy goes into battle for him against the giant Colbrand; the hero is armed "de melioribus armaturis regis, et iunxit se gladio Constantino, lanceamque sancti Mauricii in manu tulit." For Knighton, as for the tenth-century poet, "vexillum" meant the lance that had supposedly belonged to the soldier saint.

The conclusions to be drawn from this study of the two holy

p. 39, gave no instance antedating the eleventh century for the European use of monastic banners.

⁶⁰ Hofmeister, *Die heilige Lanze*, p. 65. Herzberg, p. 83, noted that Bruno was educated at Magdeburg, a special center of the Maurician cult (cf. p. 73). For the Polish war see O. Halecki, *A History of Poland* (New York, 1945), p. 17.

⁶¹ Knighton's *Chronicon, 939-1366* (ed. J. R. Lumby, Rolls Series, 2 vols., London, 1889-1895), I, 20-25. Hofmeister, p. 68, in a brief reference to Knighton's account, raised no question as to the identity of the *vexillum* and the lance of St. Mauricius. See below, n. 77.

relics that were said to have belonged to Charlemagne, agree with the tenth-century date of the Athelstan poem. Historical circumstances and ecclesiastical traditions of the ninth and tenth centuries explain why, in France, Carolingian associations might have been given to these two relics. We have also seen how, in 926, through the anti-Carolingian Archbishop Gautier, Duke Hugh might have acquired the relics at Sens. In this event, the duke's double purpose in getting these objects out of France and into the hands of the devout Athelstan would be plain.

It is curious at this point to reflect that we have, in the tenth century, two apparently independent stories of the gift of a holy lance, the one to an English king, the other, in Liudprand of Cremona's account, to a German king. In each case the gift seems to have taken place about 926. The Athelstan poem, we believe, was written between 939 and 952; Liudprand's account before his death in 972. Both stories mention a weapon of Constantine the Great; in the poem it is the pommel of his sword that is made holy by the inset Nail of the Passion; by Liudprand we are told that Constantine's spearblade bore crosses made from the holy Nails. Thus two descriptions date twice in the tenth century this peculiar concept of a Constantinian weapon made holy by one or more Nails of the Passion.

ATHELSTAN'S GIFTS TO MALMESBURY AND EXETER

The accuracy of the Gift Story in details may be open to question. But that there was a marriage embassy sent from France with rich gifts is no more to be doubted than the subsequent marriage of Athelstan's sister to Duke Hugh. Whatever the authenticity of the relics given the king, they were real objects. They did not vanish, as De Mély thought, into the void of time; they survived for more than a century at Exeter cathedral. Two eleventh-century records from that cathedral mention these relics, though they show no acquaintance with the Gift Story; they know only that relics were given by Athelstan to Exeter cathedral.

A list of these Exeter relics was first published in Dugdale's *Monasticon*⁶² in 1655 and was reprinted in later editions. It has

⁶² William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (London, 1655), I, 223-225. The faulty text was accompanied by a Latin translation by the well-known lexicographer, William Somner. For this and later editions see Gross, *Sources and Lit. of Eng. Hist.*, p. 116, No. 613. In the revised 6-volume edition of Dugdale, 1817-1830,

been mentioned occasionally, but apart from the catalogues of the Oxford manuscripts in which the list is found, little attention has been paid to it. Not until 1943 did Max Förster⁶³ publish an authoritative text and an account, based on historical and palaeographical study, of the two oldest Exeter manuscripts in which Athelstan's donation was recorded. Both lists were found in books given by Leofric,⁶⁴ the first bishop of Exeter (1050-1072), to his new cathedral, the old monastic church of St. Mary and St. Peter. The first appears in a tenth-century copy of the Gospels (Bodley, Auct. D. 2. 16),⁶⁵ in which was inserted, fol. 8^r-14^r, in handwriting of the Exeter scriptorium, a long list of Athelstan's gifts to the church. By comparison with other Exeter manuscripts Förster⁶⁶ established the writing as of 1020-1040, and showed that, as a whole, the list could not, in its present form, antedate the early-eleventh century. It refers, for instance, to "sancte Eadwardes maessedæg," a festival for the martyred king (d. 978) which was not fully established until 1008. But though Förster argued for a date about 1010 for the original of the extant list, he by no means rejected the possibility of an earlier tenth-century list to which the later items might have been added. He thought it probable that the oldest list had been destroyed when Exeter was burned by the Danes in 1003, after which the need to list anew such relics as had been preserved became acute. The loss of many of the original *tituli* for the relics at Exeter would explain the confusion and vagueness in the extant list. But in any case an Anglo-Saxon list of 1020-40 remains. It authenticates for us a hundred years before William

reprinted 1846, the relic list is found in Vol. II, 528-529. The most recent translation appeared in Mrs. Frances Rose-Troup's *The Ancient Monastery of St. Mary and St. Peter at Exeter*, in *Trans. of the Devonshire Assoc.*, LXIII (1931), 214.

⁶³ Max Förster, "Zur Geschichte des Reliquienkultus in Altengland," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-historische Abteilung, Heft 8 (Munich, 1943), pp. 63-80 (text), pp. 27-62 (discussion). The results of this invaluable study show how futile is the idea that "the subject of relics may seem unprofitable to the student of history." For his comments on Dugdale, see pp. 27-31. But even Förster, p. 37, though he recognizes the antiquity of William's Gift Story, does not note its source.

⁶⁴ For Leofric, his life, books, and donations, see *The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry with Introductory Chapters* by R. W. Chambers, Max Förster, and Robin Flower (London, 1935), ch. 1.

⁶⁵ F. Madan and H. Craster, *Summary Catalogue of Western MSS in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1922), II, Part I, No. 2819, pp. 511-512; Hans Glunz, *Hist. of the Vulgate in England* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 54 f.

⁶⁶ Förster, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-40.

of Malmesbury recorded his version of the Gift Story, the tradition that Athelstan possessed certain relics of the Passion and also a relic of St. Mauricius.

The second list, in Latin, is found in that curious compilation known as the Leofric Missal (Bodley, 579).⁶⁷ It contains a tenth-century Gregorian sacramentary written in Lotharingia, an Anglo-Saxon calendar written about 970, and various documents of a legal or liturgical nature. On fol. 6^{r-v}, is a list of relics given by Athelstan to Exeter. It is written in what Förster considered a small legal hand of the early twelfth century; but Dr. Richard Hunt of the Bodleian Library informs me that he dates it late eleventh century. This list seems wholly independent of the other. The preface is short and entirely different in style and purpose; there are no explanatory comments; many of the old relics are omitted and new ones added. It would be impossible to derive one list from the other because of their numerous differences. The identities between the two lists, the same grouping and naming of certain relics, the occurrence of the same mistakes in spelling, etc., Förster would explain by the fact that both drew on the same ancient labels which in some cases had been preserved, though lost in others. These labels marked the different relics which were piously preserved in silken bags or reliquaries. This explanation of the relationship between the two lists is undoubtedly the true one. The Latin list is a simple inventory made as carefully as possible but under the difficulty, as the compiler complains, of lost labels: "His exceptis plurime alie ibi habentur sanctorum reliquie, quarum, quia non invenimus nomina scripta, que sint ignoramus."⁶⁸

The two lists are, in truth, startling both in the number and the nature of the relics they name. The Anglo-Saxon list enumerates 138 relics, the Latin, 146; in the first, fourteen are connected with Our Lord; in the second, fifteen. For the purposes of this article only enough of the prefaces to establish the donation as Athelstan's need be quoted, and only those relics cited which

⁶⁷ Madan and Craster, *op. cit.*, II, Part I, No. 2675, pp. 487-489; *The Leofric Missal* (ed. F. E. Warren, Oxford, 1883), p. 3, for the relic list. Warren (p. xxvii) attributed the extant list to the eleventh century; Förster (*op. cit.*, p. 43) to the early twelfth. For Förster's comparison of the two lists see pp. 40-62. In his Notes, pp. 80-114, he reprinted the Latin list of the Missal. In his opinion (p. 44, n.) Exeter MS 2861 is a twelfth or thirteenth century version of the Latin list.

⁶⁸ Förster, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

are connected with the death and burial of Christ or with the Theban martyrs. The passages are quoted by Professor Förster's kind permission.

EVANGELIARIUM

(Förster, p. 63)

(H)er swutelað on þisum gewrite be þam halgum reliquium, þe Æpelsta(n) se wurð fulla kyninȝ ȝeaf in-to sca. Marian 7 sce. Petres mynstre on Exancestre ȝode to lofe for his sawle alisednisse {7} eallum þam-þe þa halȝan stowwe ȝese-cað 7 ȝewurðiað, to ecere hæle.

(This Preface continues with a long account of Athelstan's pious meditations and his resolve to honor God by collecting holy relics, of how he sent a mission over sea, and the wise men brought back many holy treasures, and how Athelstan gave a third part *þæs foresædan haliz-domes* to Exeter.)

Erost (*Ibid.*, pp. 69 ff.)

[1] of þam sylfan deorwyrðan treowe þære halȝan rode, þe Crist on þrowode 7 us ealle þær-on þæs deofles anwalde alysde.

[2] Of Drihtenes byrgene.

[6] (*fol.* 9b) Of þam spere, þe ures Drihtenes halize syd wæs mid ȝeopenod on þære rode.

MISSAL

(Förster, p. 45)

Hęc sunt nomina sanctarum reliquiarum, quę habentur in Exoniensi monasterio S. Marię et S. Petri apostoli, quarum maximam partem gloriosissimus et victoriosissimus rex Athelstanus, eiusdem scilicet loci primus constructor, illuc dedit.

(*Ibid.*, pp. 80 ff.)

1. De ligno Domini.

2. De sepulchro Domini.

6. De mucrone et de lancea, unde latus Domini fuit apertum.

10. Item de presepio et de sepulchro Domini.

- [11] Of þære candele, ðe zodes engel ontende mid heofonlicum leohte æt ures Drihtenes sepulchre on easteræfen. 11. De candela, quam angelus Domini in sepulchro Christi irradiavit.
- [37] Of sce. Candides banum þæs martyres. 37. Ossa S. Candidi martyris.
- [38] Of scs. Mauricies reliquion þæs martyres. 38. Reliquiæ S. Mauritii.
- [69] Her is eac scs. Mauricies toþ þæs eadigan martyres, þe under Maximiane þam casere for Cristes naman þrowode. 7 six ðusend 7 six 7 sixtiz martyra forð mid him þrowedon, þæge ealle þurh his tyhtinge to þam wuldorbeage martyrdomes becomon.

The assertion in the Anglo-Saxon preface that all the relics listed were acquired abroad by the king's mission is the kind of generalized statement that might be expected a hundred years or so after the donation had been made to Exeter. The compiler then could hardly be expected to distinguish the sources of the king's great collection, which was, as we know from various sources, constantly enriched by gifts. Among them, for instance, as Dean Robinson⁶⁹ pointed out, was the Gospel Book (Tiberius A II) with inscriptions (fol. 14, 23) indicating that it had been given by Otto the Great to Athelstan and by him to Christ Church, Canterbury. Of our Gift Story the Exeter compilers knew nothing, but their records bear independent witness to the belief that Athelstan once possessed the holy things of which it tells.

It is true, of course, that relics consisting of fragments of the Cross or the Crown of Thorns would not prove anything; such relics were far too common, too widely diffused. From William of Malmesbury's own remark, quoted above, we know that Athelstan was said to have given to Malmesbury the fragments of these two relics which he had received from France; from other records we hear that he also reputedly gave fragments

⁶⁹ *Times of St. Dunstan*, pp. 59-60.

of the Cross to Middleton (Milton Abbas), to Westminster, and to Abingdon.⁷⁰ But the case is different when we come to the other relics of the Gift Story, to the Passion Spear, to a relic of St. Mauricius, and a mysterious sword. The conjunction of all these things together is to be matched previously only in the original Athelstan poem.

The two Exeter entries concerning the Passion Spear differ only in language. They say practically the same thing and both were derived probably from the same ancient label. The sword relic (*de mucrone*) mentioned in the Latin list had evidently lost its label; but to have been listed with the Passion Spear, the two fragments must have been preserved together in the same reliquary. Nothing in the religious traditions known to us would explain the association of sword and lance. Their conjunction would remain wholly mysterious, were it not for the Gift Story in which the Sword of Constantine with its inset Nail of the Crucifixion, is, like the Passion Spear, among the relics given by Duke Hugh to Athelstan. These presents would have passed into the king's treasury; in time the most holy relics, or parts of them, evidently went from there to Exeter. The burning of Exeter in 1003 explains the loss of many of the labels even though the relics themselves were saved. By the time the lists were compiled, no explanation was known for the sword. The preacher who seems to have compiled the Anglo-Saxon list, perhaps for a Relics-Day sermon or processional exhibition,⁷¹ may have thought it better not to mention a relic of which he knew nothing at all; the Latin compiler, equally ignorant, nevertheless seems to have felt constrained to report in his inventory the existence of a bit of a sword in company with a bit of the Passion Lance. This unique association of the two relics, and their connection with Athelstan alike take us back to the Gift Story.

So, too, does the unspecified Maurician relic. The name of St. Mauricius and his day had been known in Britain from the eighth century;⁷² his legend with that of the Theban Legion had

⁷⁰ See above, n. 26.

⁷¹ Förster, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-8, 53. He writes that he would now change his interpretation (p. 8) of "reliczonȝ" to "going with relics," a procession with relics.

⁷² *Calendar of St. Willibrord (Paris, B. N., Lat., 10837)* (ed. H. A. Wilson, London, 1918, Henry Bradshaw Society, LV, 11), 22 September. For St. Mauricius in the Martyrology of Bede (second family of manuscripts), see Dom Henry Quentin, *Les Martyrologes Historiques du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1908), pp. 33, 54, 125; for Bede-Florus, p. 280. Cf. also F. Wormald, *English Kalendars before A.D. 1100* (London,

been retold in Anglo-Saxon by Ælfric in his *Lives of the Saints* (993-998),⁷³ saints whom monks, as Ælfric said, especially delighted to honor.⁷⁴ But the cult of the soldier saint had never been as vigorous in Britain as it was at an early date in France, or, from the latter part of the tenth century, in Germany. Englishmen rarely bore the saint's name⁷⁵ and relics of him and his fellow-martyrs are difficult to find in the English relic lists known to us.⁷⁶ The Exeter lists report possession of a bone of St. Candidus, one of the Theban legionaries, and a tooth of St. Mauricius. These are, in truth, precisely the type of relic which Athelstan's mission showed such zeal in collecting. But what was that *Reliquion* of St. Mauricius, carefully listed as a separate item (No. 38) in the Anglo-Saxon list, unless it was some fragment of the *vexillum S. Mauricii* which Athelstan had received from Hugh? In this list, items 38 and 69, this fragment and a tooth of the saint, are carefully differentiated; in the Latin list they are merged into *Reliquiae* (No. 38). By itself we might well doubt what the unspecified Maurician relic⁷⁷ was; in conjunction with the fragments of the Cross, the spear and a sword relic that could have no reason for being there unless it were a bit of the sword of Constantine, there seems good reason for believing that this fourth relic, like the other three, should be identified with the relics received by Athelstan and here reported as being the relics given by him to Exeter.

The relics in the Exeter lists are, indeed, the vestigial remains of those celebrated in the panegyric. They have lost the descriptive detail and the Carolingian associations of the poem. They are still described as having come from abroad, but no word is said of France. All this is what might be expected to happen during an interval of over a hundred years between Athelstan's donation to Exeter and the compilation of the first extant list of

1934, Henry Bradshaw Society, LXXII), pp. 10, 24, 38, 52, 66, 80, 122, 234, 242, 262; *English Kalendars After A.D. 1100*, Henry Bradshaw Society, LXXVII (1939) and LXXXI (1946) *passim*.

⁷³ Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* (ed. W. W. Skeat, London, 1881-1900), II, No. 28, pp. 158-168.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 4.

⁷⁵ W. G. Searle, *Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum: A List of Anglo-Saxon Proper Names* (Cambridge, 1897), has only two entries for the name Mauricius.

⁷⁶ For relic lists of English churches see Förster, *op. cit.*, p. 24, n. 1; also index, p. 146 (*Reliquien, Inventare*.)

⁷⁷ Förster, p. 37, without discussion, equates the *vexillum* of William's Gift Story, with No. 38, in the Anglo-Saxon list.

relics. Eleventh-century Exeter knew nothing of the Gift Story; that was sleeping in a poem in Malmesbury Abbey until, in another hundred years, William of Malmesbury, through his summary and quotations, revived it. But he, in turn, knew nothing of the Exeter claims and lists. These older lists, however, establish as fact, not fiction, the continuing belief at Exeter that relics such as the Gift Story described had belonged to the pious king and had been given by him to the cathedral.

The interesting later history of the Gift Story as it appeared in mediaeval allusions to William's version, or in bold appropriations of his account, like that made at Abingdon, or in Middle English chronicles based upon it, or in the influence of these upon such English Carolingian stories as *Roland and Vernagu*,⁷⁸ must be left to later discussion. So, too, must be postponed discussion of the relationship of the original account of Athelstan's acquisition of the Passion Relics to that of Charlemagne's acquisition of several of the same relics as told in versions of the *Destruction de Rome* and the *Fierabras*, tales in which Charlemagne acquires the relics through warfare in Spain or Italy, or in visions of those even more extraordinary narratives dealing with his supposed journey to the East, the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*,⁷⁹ and the *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus clavum et coronam Domini a Constantinopoli Aquis Grani detulerit, qualiterque Carolus Calvus hec ad sanctum Dyonisium retulerit*.⁸⁰ The results of that later study may, however, be anticipated here in part by noting that in no known version of any of these stories before 1240, and in only one Continental version⁸¹ of the *Descriptio* in the thirteenth century, did Charlemagne obtain the Passion Lance. That was conspicuous by its absence from the other Passion Relics, perhaps, as Professor Walpole⁸² has suggested, out of deference, lasting for at least a century, to the tremendous effect

⁷⁸ In my article, "The Auchinleck *Roland and Vernagu* and the *Short Chronicle*," I have shown that *RV* borrowed in lines 92-94, 109-213, the very wording 92-94, 109-123, the very wording of the *Chronicle's* translation, lines 563-582, of William's Gift Story.

⁷⁹ See above, n. 17, for Holmes' conjecture on the *Pèlerinage*.

⁸⁰ Ronald N. Walpole, "Charlemagne and Roland," *Univ. of California Pub. in Modern Philology*, XXI (1944), 387, 396-402, 416-417, gives an authoritative account of the *Descriptio*.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 416, on the *Chronique rimée* (1241) of Philippe Mouskés. For Mouskés's use of the *Descriptio*, see Walpole's later work, "Mouskés and the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle," *Univ. of Cal. Pub. in Mod. Phil.*, XXVI (1947), pp. 398, 428.

⁸² *Charlemagne and Roland*, on the Lance of Longinus, pp. 416-417.

upon western Christendom of the discovery of the Passion Lance at Antioch in 1098. But it has not been observed that in versions of the Carolingian stories produced in England the Lance was as commonly added to the other relics as in Continental versions it was commonly omitted. The fact gives added importance to the tenth-century poem's statement that Charlemagne had once possessed the Lance and to the similar claim in the *Chanson de Roland*, of which the oldest manuscript (Digby 23) was written in England between 1130-1140.⁸³ Was the ultimate origin of these claims the Carolingian relic, the *summitas acuminis lanceae*, which in the ninth century we have found reason to believe was at St. Riquier, then at Sens, and in the tenth century was sent to Athelstan? Was it in England rather than in France that the belief took root in Charlemagne's one-time possession of this relic? The question is interesting and important for many reasons, but for its consideration, as for the related problem of the emperor's possession of the lance of St. Mauricius, it is essential to establish the date and genuine existence of the all too little known panegyric to Athelstan. It is that which has been attempted here.

⁸³ *Chanson de Roland, Reproduction phototypique du MS Digby 23, Étude paléographique* (par Charles Samaran, Paris, 1932, for the Roxburghe Club, No. 196), p. 38. On the two allusions to the Norman Conquest of England contained in this poem, see Robert Fawtier, *La Chanson de Roland: Étude historique* (Paris, 1933), pp. 98-104.

THE PASSION LANCE RELIC
AND THE WAR CRY MONJOIE
IN THE *CHANSON DE ROLAND*
AND RELATED TEXTS*

ONE of the most sensational events of the First Crusade was the discovery at Antioch in 1098 of what was supposed to be the lance-head that had pierced the side of Christ. In the twentieth century, when the possible influence of the Crusades on the *Chanson de Roland* has been studied more and more searchingly,¹ the famous eleventh-century event has become a sharply disputed point in *Roland* scholarship. Was the poet's statement that the tip of the Passion Lance was in Charlemagne's sword hilt written before or after 1098, with or without knowledge of the Antioch lance? It is the purpose of this article to review briefly previous theories on the matter, and to offer new evidence both as to the probable written source of what we shall call the Lance passage in the *Roland*, and as to the tradition of a French Lance relic, a relic with Carolingian associations even in the ninth and tenth centuries. We shall also consider the textual evidence, provided by the manuscripts of the *Roland* itself, that the war cry Monjoie, whatever its ultimate origin, came, so far as the poet knew and said, from the holy relic in Charlemagne's sword Joyeuse. Though none of this will bring us to a precise date for the *Roland*, it will at least serve, I hope, to take the "must" out of arguments based on the Lance passage, arguments which assert that the great poem "must" be dated after 1098.

* From *Romanic Review* (1950), 241-60.
By permission of the Editors.

¹ For surveys of opinions dating the poem before or after the First Crusade, see Joseph Bédier, *La Chanson de Roland, commentée*, Paris, 1927, pp. 40-64; Raoul Mortier, *La Chanson de Roland, essai d'interprétation du problème des origines*, Paris, 1939, ch. IV.

Whatever the date or place of origin of the *Chanson de Roland*,² it is now agreed that the oldest extant copy was written in England by an Anglo-Norman scribe between 1130 and 1150.³ In this manuscript, commonly called the Oxford *Roland* (O, Bodleian, Digby 23) the Lance passage occurs in *laisse* CLXXXIII. The whole of this *laisse* is quoted below:⁴

<i>Li emperere s'est culcet en un pret;</i>	2496
<i>Sun grant espiet met a sun chef li ber;</i>	
<i>Icele noit ne se volt il desarmer,</i>	
<i>Si ad vestut sun blanc osberc sasfret,</i>	
<i>Laciet sun elme, ki est a or gemmet,</i>	2500
<i>Geinte Joiuse, unches ne fut sa per,</i>	
<i>Ki cascun jur muet XXX clartez.</i>	
<i>Asez savum de la lance parler,</i>	
<i>Dunt Nostre Sire fut en la cruiz nasfret;</i>	
<i>Carles en ad la mure, mercit Deu;</i>	2505
<i>En l'oret punt l'ad faite manuvrer.</i>	
<i>Pur ceste honur e pur ceste bontet,</i>	
<i>Li num's Joiuse l'espee fut dunet.</i>	
<i>Baruns françois nel deivent ublier;</i>	
<i>Enseigne en unt de "Munjoie!" crier;</i>	2510
<i>Pur ço nes poet nule gent cuntrester.</i>	

² A. Pauphilet, "La Date du Roland," *Études dédiées à Mario Roques*, Paris, 1946, p. 7: "La date . . . il n'est guère dans la littérature médiévale de question plus importante, ni plus embarrassante." Pauphilet argued for a date before 1064 and severely criticized the work of E. Mireaux (*La Chanson de Roland et l'histoire de France*, Paris, 1945, p. 208 ff.) who dated the poem about 1154. Cf. also Louis Michel's severe review of Mireaux, "Les Origines et les transformations de la *Chanson de Roland*, examen d'une théorie nouvelle," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, XXV (1946-1947), 258-301.

³ *La Chanson de Roland, reproduction phototypique du MS Digby 23*, éd. par le comte Alexandre de Laborde; *Étude paléographique* de Ch. Samaran, Paris, 1932, présentée au Roxburghe Club de Londres, vol. 196, p. 38. Cf. Pauphilet, loc. cit., p. 7: "[la date] n'est généralement discutée." In recent editions of the *Roland*, F. Whitehead (Oxford, 1942, p. v, n. 1) observed: "Before Samaran the majority of scholars thought Digby not copied before 1170"; Gardner, Woods and Hilton (Boston, London, 1942, p. xii) noted: "Samaran has established that this MS was made by an Anglo-Norman scribe about 1140."

⁴ For a facsimile, see Laborde, op. cit., f. 45 v. All quotations from the *Roland* are from the edition of all the manuscripts by Raoul Mortier, *Les Textes de la Chanson de Roland*, X tomes, Paris, 1940-1944. For MS O, *laisse* CLXXXIII, cf. I, 71.

Piety, pride, patriotism give to these sixteen lines their glowing fervor. They have that *précellence* which Bédier⁵ claimed for the Oxford manuscript as a whole. No other French text of the *Chanson de Roland*, no foreign redaction, as Mortier's recent invaluable edition of all the texts of the poem makes plain, adds anything of significance to this passage; elsewhere the lines of O are repeated or weakly diluted, shortened or omitted.⁶ So far as this passage is concerned, the other texts might all be read as derivatives of O.⁷ Among the French manuscripts, only two omit all mention of the Lance and the explanation given in O for the names Joyeuse and Monjoie. Since these two manuscripts, L and T, were derived from the same source as P,⁸ which contains the whole passage, the omission would seem to have been deliberate.

The omission is less easy to explain in the earliest of the foreign redactions of the *Roland*. Despite some recurrent controversy about the date when Pfaffe Konrad wrote his *Ruolandes Liet*, a date between 1131 and 1133 is generally accepted.⁹ At the end of the poem (verses 9063-9083), he said he was translating first into Latin, then into German, a French book (*ane theme buoche gescriben . . . in franzischer zungen*).¹⁰ This was

⁵ Bédier, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-125.

⁶ For the corresponding passage in other manuscripts, cf. Mortier, *Textes* (cited by volume and page): MS V⁴ in II, 79; C in IV, 121; V⁷ in V, xxx; P in VI, 78 T in VII, 61; L in VIII, 43. The Lorraine fragments, t. IX, have nothing relating to this section of the poem.

⁷ On the general relation of the manuscripts to each other, see E. Faral, *La Chanson de Roland*, Paris, 1932, pp. 47 ff.: "Aucun des textes conservés dans les divers manuscrits de Venise (V), de Châteauroux (C), de Paris (P) ou d'ailleurs ne permet de remonter à une tradition ancienne qui aurait différé par sa contexture de la rédaction d'Oxford." This was also the opinion of Pauphilet, *loc. cit.*, p. 8. Bédier (*op. cit.*, p. 84) derived all the versions except O from a lost poem *a*, and O and *a* from the same archetype.

⁸ Table de filiation, Bédier, *ibid.*, p. 85; Mortier, *Textes*, I, viii, ix.

⁹ Against Mireaux's dating (*op. cit.*, pp. 97-99) of the *Ruolandes Liet*, ca. 1170, see Michel, *loc. cit.*, p. 271. The date, 1131-1133, was accepted by Bédier, p. 40, on the basis of E. Schroeder's arguments in his edition of Konrad's *Kaiserchronik*. In *Les Légendes épiques*, 3^e éd., Paris 1929 (= *Légendes*), III, 187, Bédier spoke of the German poem as "une traduction libre de la *Chanson de Roland* et la plus ancienne des imitations étrangères"; R. Fawtier (*La Chanson de Roland, étude historique*, Paris, 1933, p. 65) thought Konrad's translation furnished a *terminus ad quem* for the composition of the French poem.

¹⁰ *Das Rolandeslied*, ed. Karl Bartsch, Leipzig, 1874. Quotations are from this edition; for Bartsch's discussion of Konrad's sources and his pietistic expansions, see pp. xi ff. Mortier (*Textes*, X) provided both a facsimile and a French translation of the German poem. Where the Lance passage should occur, between 7073-7080, there are verses reminiscent of O, vss. 2495, 2482-2488, 2480, 2499, 2519,

l'époque de *Roland*, était déjà obscur et provoquait l'effort des étymologistes." On the next page he called attention to these two "étymologies," the one just given and the one in the Lance passage, as not necessarily coming from the same author; one might be an interpolation. For this conjecture no reason was offered. And in point of fact it must be noted that war cries were not a recent innovation; they had long been known. The Romaine passage, moreover, does not offer an etymology but the plain substitution of one name for another. It assumes the existence of the cry and the explanation previously given for the name (verses 3092 ff.). In the poet's mind and words, the war cry plainly antedated its association with the oriflamme. The Lance passage, the oriflamme passage, do not suggest different authors, nor does one seem more an interpolation than the other. It seems rather as if the same poet were trying to harmonize different sources, different stories, with his own unified purpose.¹⁴

This brings us to a consideration of the famous word itself. In the Oxford *Roland* it is spelled Munioie (printed Munjoie), and that is the basis for every variant spelling in other manuscripts (Monjoie, Monçoia, etc.). The statement may be verified by comparing the line references for Munjoie in O, here listed in note 12, with the line references from O given by M. Mortier at the right of each of the *Roland* texts he has published. No one of them ever uses the spelling Montjoie save for a single instance in T, verse 622 (Mortier, VII), a manuscript of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. It has ten Monjoies. Konrad's poem shows that he likewise knew nothing of Montjoie. So far then as *Roland* manuscripts are concerned there is no textual authority whatever, until the one instance in T, the latest of them all, for the spelling with *mont*. But this fact has been almost universally ignored and there is hardly a modernization or trans-

gendankens, Stuttgart, 1935, pp. 83-84. Erdmann commented on the double meaning in the *Roland* and elsewhere of *enseigne* as war cry and banner. Cf. also his ch. VI, "Vexillum Sancti Petri."

¹⁴ For theories before 1939 about the oriflamme and the war cry, see Mortier, *Essai*, pp. 104-109; for summarizing comment on later theories that identify various hills as Montjoie, see Jean Favière, "Montjoie et Moultoie," *Romania*, LXIX (1946), 101-103. For an article by the present writer, "The Oriflamme of France and the War Cry Monjoie in the Twelfth Century," see *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Greene*, ed. D. Miner (Princeton, 1954), pp. 67-82. Here it need only be emphasized that actual twelfth-century manuscripts do not connect the cry or the banner with either a *mont* or with St. Denis. On this matter there has been general misapprehension.

lation of the poem, or comment on it, that does not use Montjoie.¹⁵ Almost universally Ducange's opinion (*Glossarium*, X, 40) has been accepted that the *Roland's mun* or *mon* represented, as it often did elsewhere, a shortened form of *mont*. Bédier himself, despite his passion for textual accuracy, in mentioning the war cry, always used Montjoie. Yet it was he who, in the study referred to, threw lasting doubt on the attempts of Ducange, Sepet, and others, to identify Montjoie with some specific *Mons Gaudii* known to French pilgrims. Even when quoting the words "*Meum gaudium, quod Francorum signum est,*" from Ordericus Vitalis, Bédier (II, 248, note 1) referred to him as "le premier historien qui mentionne le cri de Montjoie." Similarly Ducange spoke of Ordericus as saying, "Montjoie estoit le cry des François"; Mortier (*Essai*, page 105), recently, has said the same thing. Now whatever, in the opinion of scholars, Ordericus ought to have said, it is certain, even from their own quotations, that he wrote *meum gaudium* and at a time (*ca.* 1135) contemporary with *Roland* (O).¹⁶ He knew the *Roland* in some form, for, in another passage, he likened the crusading hero Bohemond to Roland, "francigeno Rollando." His unmistakable Latin words should not be changed; his *meum* was not *mont*. It agreed with the Munjoie of the Oxford *Roland* and practically all subsequent *Roland* manuscripts.

The origin of the cry Monjoie has been interpreted in no fewer than twelve different ways. In Kurt Löffel's *Beiträge zur Geschichte von Montjoie* (Tübingen, 1934), pages 17-18, he listed these various explanations and the writers who proposed them; the first two were those we have noted from the *Roland* itself; then came the derivations from *meum gaudium*, *meum Jovem*, *montis gaudium*, *moult de joie*, *Mon(t)joie de saint Denis*, *mons*, *monticulus*, *mons Jovis*, Frankish *mund gawi*, *mons gaudii*.

¹⁵ A few early writers on the *Roland* thought that *mon* was derived from *meum* and modified *joie*, a masculine noun derived from *gaudium*. Cf. F. Génin, *La Chanson de Roland, poème de Théroutde*, Paris, 1850, pp. 421-424. He interpreted *monjoie* as *mon joyau*, i.e., the Lance relic. In his long note he remarked that the spelling of Monjoie, with or without the *t*, might be "le nœud et la solution du problème."

¹⁶ Ordericus Vitalis died *ca.* 1141. Cf. Charles Gross, *Sources and Literature of English History*, 2d ed., London, 1915, p. 383. For Orderic's *meum gaudium*, see his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. A. Le Prévost, Paris, 1838-1855, IV, 341. Prévost's note asserted: "Notre auteur traduit fort inexactement [!] ici le cri de guerre français Montjoie Saint Denis." On Orderic's own reference (III, 186) to the *Roland*, see Fawtier, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.

Though he quoted (page 18) the text of the Oxford *Roland*, he referred to the war cry only as Montjoie, and dismissed the explanation given in the Lance passage as “zu phantasievoll, als dass man ernstlich zur Diskussion bringen könnte” (page 18).

Though few would now put the matter so bluntly, there has been, none the less, ever since the discovery of the Oxford *Roland*, increasing agreement that the Lance passage must be disregarded. The poet's clear statements about the Lance relic and the names Joyeuse and Monjoie had obviously no connection with a *mont*; but since later writers were sure that the cry came from some Montjoie, the poet must have been wrong. Presumably the fundamental reason for this conclusion was grammatical; *joie* was known only as a feminine noun and so could not be preceded by a masculine *mon*; *mon* must be a shortened form of *mont*. Though Godefroy (*Dictionnaire*, V, 400) had given three examples of a masculine *joie* from the poems of G. de Soignies, these were ignored, and the possibility that *joie* might be a noun of double gender was not discussed. Yet in medieval French, as Mildred Pope (*From Latin to Modern French*, Manchester, 1934, page 305) has observed, “double genders were relatively frequent.” Löffel (page 25) noted from Diez (*Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 1878) a masculine *joie* in Provençal. Professor Jean Misrahi, speaking of Professor Roach's edition of *The Continuations of the Old French Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes*, I (Philadelphia, 1949), called my attention to the following instance in northern Old French:

<i>Mais li quatre ont tant chevalchié. . .</i>	12455
<i>Et devant le roi sont venu.</i>	12457
<i>Tels joie mais ne fu veü.</i>	

In commenting to me on this passage Professor Misrahi observed that the masculine gender is indicated both by *tels* and by *veü*, which rimes with *venu* (masculine plural); elsewhere, in this Picard manuscript (Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français 12576) of the second half of the thirteenth century, we find *merveillouse joie* (verse 12409), and this feminine *joie* appears again (verse 13492) in a notable passage, to be quoted presently, on the Holy Lance itself. In northern France the Latin *gaudia* as a feminine singular seems generally to have replaced the neuter *gaudium* but there must have been continued awareness, especially among clerics, that Latin neuters commonly became

masculine nouns in French. The masculine Munioie of *Roland* (O), used as it is in connection with a holy relic, does not represent a grammatical error. It is a clerical rather than a popular rendering of *meum gaudium*.

Monjoie, the war cry, said the poet, came from the sword Joyeuse. This bore, to quote Bédier's eloquent comment, "le plus beau nom que puisse porter une épée, le nom que seul un Français pouvait inventer, Joyeuse . . . 'l'espée de France'" (*Légendes*, IV, 460). Was the poet thinking of Charlemagne's personal joy in possessing that *joyau* among relics, the tip of the Passion Lance, or of something deeper, more universal? Had he any antecedent authority or suggestion for the idea of putting so holy a relic in a sword hilt, or of making Joyeuse, by reason of the relic, a victory weapon?

No source for this group of ideas has been suggested. Léon Gautier's¹⁷ long note on Joyeuse, the basis for nearly all subsequent comment, brought together many references to the sword, but none that antedated the *Roland*, none that explained these special features. Professor Mario Pei, in his book on *French Precursors of the Chanson de Roland* (N. Y., 1948), page 54, remarked that "relics assume a military importance in the epic," and cited three instances in the *Roland* in which relics are mentioned as having been put into weapons: Ganelon swears on those in his sword (verse 607); Roland's own sword is well supplied with them (verses 2345-2348); Charlemagne's sword has the Lance tip. Professor Pei noted no earlier reference to the custom. But there are two instances, both in the tenth century, which deserve special notice. In his *Antapodosis*, a mélange of Latin and Greek, Bishop Liudprand of Cremona (d. 972) described the Lance of Constantine as having on its blade crosses made from the Nails of the Crucifixion.¹⁸ This reference no one, presumably, would think could have been known to the French poet. The other is in a long neglected Anglo-Latin poem which may well have been the source of the lance reference in the *Roland*.

¹⁷ Gautier, *La Chanson de Roland*, 2 vols., Tours, 1872, II, 190-191.

¹⁸ *The Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, tr. F. A. Wright, London, 1939, p. 160, from the *Antapodosis*, Bk. IV, ch. 25. After the surrender of the holy lance by King Rodolf of Burgundy to Henry I the Fowler, it became part of the regalia of German kings and emperors. In the eleventh century it or some substitute was known as the Lance of St. Mauricius. Cf. A. Hofmeister, *Die heilige Lanze, ein Abzeichen des alten Reich*, Breslau, 1908; Walther Holzmann, *König Heinrich und die heilige Lanze*, Bonn, Universitäts Verlag, 1947; my article "The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Athelstan: the Lances of Longinus and St. Mauricius."

The poem was used by William of Malmesbury as a chief source for the account of King Athelstan (d. 939) in *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* (*GRA*).¹⁹ William quoted from it sixty-five hexameter lines and carefully summarized the rest of the poem. He had found it, he said (*GRA*, I, 144)—and it must be remembered that William was librarian of his abbey—in an ancient volume (“in quo sane volumine vetusto”); he believed that this long panegyric on the king had been written in the latter’s lifetime (“favor Ethelstani adhuc viventis”).²⁰ The poem patterns the greatness of the English king on that of Charlemagne; its plan indicates the influence of Einhard’s *Vita Karoli Magni Imperatoris*. One of the longest stories summarized by William and given just before his poetic excerpt on the Battle of Brunanburg (937), concerns the great gifts sent from France to King Athelstan when Duke Hugh the Great (wrongly called King Hugh) sought the hand of the king’s sister. The actual marriage took place in 926. Among the holy relics sent to the devout king were fragments of the Cross and the Crown of Thorns; also a Holy Nail and the Passion Lance itself. Of these last two we read:

ensem Constantini magni, in quo litteris aureis nomen antiqui
possessoris legebatur: in capulo quoque super crassas auri laminas
clavum ferreum affixum cerneres, unum ex quatuor quos Judaica
factio Domini corporis aptarat supplicio; lanceam Caroli Magni,
quam imperator invictissimus, contra Saracenos exercitum ducens,
siquando in hostem vibrabat, nunquam nisi victor abibat: ferebatur
eadem esse quae, Domini lateri centurionis manu impacta, pretiosi
vulneris hiatu Paradisum miseris mortalibus aperuit (*GRA*, I, 150).

Whatever the audacity of the tenth-century poet in making these assertions, it is certain that his belief that Athelstan had once possessed a relic known as the Lance is confirmed by an Anglo-Saxon record dating from about 1030 which lists this relic

¹⁹ *GRA*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series, London, 1887, I, 149-152. In his editorial comment, II, lxi-lxv, a passage singularly missed by later commentators, Stubbs fully recognized the antiquity of the poem. The latest and most authoritative English historian to accept the poem is Sir Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford, 1947, pp. 315, 335, 686, 688. My article cited in n. 18 sets forth further historical and literary reasons for this date, also evidence for the poem’s concept of Athelstan as an “English Charlemagne.”

²⁰ Though William, in the same passage, deprecated the style of the panegyric, the care with which he quoted and summarized its contents shows that in it, as Stubbs (*GRA*, II, lxi) has remarked, William thought that “he had found a treasure.”

among those given by the king to Exeter Cathedral.²¹ This document authenticates the relic at least to the extent of proving that such a relic was at Exeter in the early eleventh century and was still supposed to have been given by Athelstan. What is even more important for our present inquiry, however, is the fact that the Latin poem not only tells how Athelstan came to receive the relic, but offers a probable written source, preserved in book form to William of Malmesbury's own day, for the group of ideas brought together in the Lance passage of the *Roland*. From William's prose summary we see (1) that the Latin poem associated the Passion Lance with Charlemagne; (2) made it a victory weapon; (3) connected it with joy since it opened Paradise to mortals; and (4) told of a golden-hilted sword inset with a relic of the Passion.

These four distinctive ideas, unknown or unrelated elsewhere, anticipate those in the Lance passage of the *Roland*, a passage which more than one scholar, like T. A. Jenkins in his edition of the poem (N. Y., 1924, page 181, note), has thought to be peculiarly the poet's own. The latter used the ideas creatively, not slavishly: he made the Lance tip, not the Nail, the sword's inset Passion relic. The greatest emperor must have the holiest relic. The poet omitted here specific mention of that Paradise which elsewhere his Turpin promises so freely to the dying warriors of France (verses 1135, 1522, 2197), but now that we have the clue to his thought, can we doubt that it was the description of the Lance as opening Paradise and its eternal joy that inspired the French poet's beautiful symbolic name for Joyeuse, the sword that held the relic, or for the war cry that commemorated it? Can we still suppose that it was Charlemagne's joy in possessing the Lance relic that French barons were not to forget when they shouted "Munjoie"? In other stories of Charlemagne's acquisition of other Passion relics, stories to be considered shortly, their twelfth-century authors said nothing of joy; they represented the emperor as receiving the relics with blinding tears of contrition, with utter humility. In the *Roland*, where relic and sword and cry are so palpably linked together, was it not by the thought of something not of this, but of the celestial, world? Was it not in the poet's mind, as he must have supposed it to be in the minds of his contemporaries, that the Lance relic was a symbol of hope, of joy? Well might men follow the joyous sword that held the relic! well might they shout, on whatsoever darkest hill, in

whatsoever saddest moment of human defeat, their triumphant affirmation of faith, of joy to come, "Monjoie! Monjoie!"

A remarkable confirmation of this association of holy joy with the Passion Lance is to be found in that same continuation of Chrétien's *Perceval* to which we have already referred. Gawain has come to the Grail Castle; he sees the Bleeding Lance and asks why it bleeds. An old man identifies it as the Lance with which Longinus struck God's Son and speaks of it as follows:

"Or vos dirai premièrement
De la lance al comencement,
Le grant damage et la dolor
Qu'en avint et la grant honor, 13464
Ensi com Diex l'ot establi,
Dont nos somes sain et gari. . . .
et nos en joie irons, 13489
Ses sans ert nostre raençons.
La grant joie ne vos puis dire,
Que nos gaaigna cil cops, sire."

Here again, as in the *Roland*, a poet speaks of the Holy Lance in terms of *joie* and *honor*.

Since the Athelstan panegyric explains then, as does nothing else, the group of four related ideas in the *Roland's* account of Joyeuse, the date of the Latin poem becomes a matter of special importance. Unless we continue to ignore William of Malmesbury's account of his ancient source and his reputation as one of the most scrupulous of medieval historians, likewise the internal evidence of the poem itself as shown by his summary and long quotations, and finally the opinion of such eminent authorities in Anglo-Saxon history as Bishop Stubbs and Sir Frank Stenton, we must accept the panegyric as a tenth-century poem. The author of the Lance passage in the *Roland* either borrowed from it the four related ideas or took them from William himself.²² Since

²¹ For mention of the Passion Spear in the Anglo-Saxon and twelfth-century Latin record, both originally documents of Exeter Cathedral but now at the Bodleian, see Max Förster, "Zur Geschichte des Reliquienkultus in Altengland," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Abt., Munich, 1943, VIII, pp. 69 (6), 81 (6); for Förster's discussion of the dates of these manuscripts, see pp. 39 ff.

²² William elsewhere (*GRA*, II, 302) referred to the "cantilena Rollandi." Bédier (*La Chanson de Roland, commentée*, pp. 57-59) thought the historian alluded to songs, possibly in Latin, older than the *Chanson de Roland*, which

few scholars today would admit even the possibility that the *Roland* poet wrote after 1125, we must accept the former alternative. The *Roland* borrowed from the panegyric.

It seems important here to call attention to an almost unknown French tradition that may well have been the starting point for the Carolingian association given to the Lance relic. Though references to this relic, apart from its supposed discovery at Antioch, are exceedingly rare before the thirteenth century, one record from the once great Carolingian monastery of St. Riquier in Ponthieu still exists. The monk Hariulf states that he finished his Chronicle of the abbey's history in 1088,²³ but for that Chronicle, of course, he used much earlier sources. One of these, in the opinion of his learned editor, Ferdinand Lot (page xxviii) was the ninth-century *Translatio* of the monk Jeremiah, who was also treasurer of the abbey. In this Jeremiah reported that when Ponthieu was ravaged by invaders (the Danes of 879-883, according to Lot), he was ordered to carry some of the most precious relics of St. Riquier to Sens for safekeeping. Among them was that "summitas acuminis lanceae, de qua ejusdem Domini latus pro nostra salute jam mortui manu militis fuit apertum, unde etiam Ecclesiae sacramenta fluxerunt."²⁴ This relic had previously been mentioned in Hariulf's Chronicle (page 100) as one of those given to St. Riquier by Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious (d. 840). The Jeremiah story, as reported by Hariulf, has some obvious errors and the original *Translatio* is lost. But Lot, after careful consideration of all these matters, had no doubt that the *Translatio* did once exist and that in it there was an allusion to this and other holy relics brought to, not by, the Emperor Louis from Constantinople.²⁵ Lot said nothing, however,

Bédier here dated between 1098-1100. Fawtier (op. cit., pp. 77-80) argued that William's reference concerned the *Roland* itself.

²³ *Hariulf, Chronique de Saint-Riquier*, ed. Ferdinand Lot, Paris, 1894, pp. xvii ff., 283. Hariulf's first redaction of 1088 ended with Abbot Gervin, Bk. IV. Changes in this last book were made between 1096-1105.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 142. No later mention of this particular relic is known save in accounts palpably derived from Hariulf. Cf. notes 43, 44 in my article cited above.

²⁵ *Hariulf*, p. 100. Lot (*ibid.*, n. 4) thought that Hariulf, in saying the relics mentioned had been brought by Louis from Constantinople, had perhaps been influenced by some legend of Charlemagne's fabulous journey to the East. L. A. Vigneras, "L'Abbaye de Charroux et la légende du Pèlerinage," *RR*, XXXII (1941), 121-128, has argued that a legend of this journey, first mentioned in Italy in the late tenth century, was known in France at Charroux before 1082. Hariulf may have been influenced by it in saying that the relics were brought by, rather than to, Louis, but it was a change that might easily have been made in entire independence

of the exceptional interest of this early allusion to a relic of the Holy Lance as having been in France and in the possession of Charlemagne's son. So far as I know, this relic has not been mentioned in connection with the *Chanson de Roland*, yet here, it would seem, was the possible beginning of a French Carolingian tradition about the Holy Lance; here, too, as in the Oxford *Roland*, there was mention only of the tip of the Lance.

From the account of the monk Jeremiah, we learn that this precious relic was taken to Sens in the ninth century. What happened to it then? I have suggested in my article on the relics of Charlemagne and Athelstan that an answer is to be found in the political circumstances of the early tenth century. For it was then that the all-powerful Duke Hugh the Great, father of Hugh Capet, might have had access, through the compliant Archbishop Gautier of Sens, even to the holy treasures of Sens. Both men were in violent opposition to the Carolingian dynasty of Charles the Simple; in 923 Duke Hugh had helped in battle to defeat Charles, and Gautier had crowned the new usurper, Raoul of Burgundy.²⁶ In 926, when Duke Hugh sought the hand of Athelstan's sister, he sent from France, according to the Latin panegyric, a prodigious gift of secular and religious treasures; two of the holy relics were said to have belonged to Charlemagne. Perhaps at the time such things had for the ruthless duke chiefly an export value. The gift was not reported in France; at least we hear of no recorded outcry until the thirteenth century when Aubri de Trois Fontaines read the story in William of Malmesbury's *Chronicle*. Aubri thought it impossible that such treasures should ever have been sent out of France and all for the sake of one woman!²⁷

The evidence so far considered leads us to think that there was in France in the ninth century, according to the monk Jeremiah, a relic of the Passion Lance which had been given to

of the Italian story. Bédier (*Légendes*, 3rd ed., IV, 131) suggested that the legend, when it appeared in France, was a re-invention; on p. 128, n. 3, he called attention to the statement of Abbot Angilbert of St. Riquier (d. 814) that holy relics were received by Charlemagne "de Constantinopoli vel Hierosolimis" (*Hariulf*, p. 62).

²⁶ Ph. Lauer, *Robert I et Raoul de Bourgogne, rois de France, 923-936*, Paris, 1910, pp. 12-15. See index for Hugues le Grand. Cf. also Joseph Calmette, *Le Monde féodal*, Paris, 1937, p. 148; and p. 144 for a useful note on the movement of relics in the ninth century.

²⁷ *Mon. Ger. Hist. SS.*, XXIII, 773: "Mirum, si ita est, pro una muliere hec omnia a Francia fuisse alienata."

St. Riquier by Charlemagne's youngest son; in the tenth century, a Passion Lance, supposed to have belonged to Charlemagne, was reported, in an Anglo-Latin poem, to have been sent from France to the devout King Athelstan; in an early eleventh-century list of relics at Exeter Cathedral, a piece of the Passion Lance was recorded as the gift of Athelstan; before 1088 the chronicler Hariulf had retold Jeremiah's ancient story. The Latin poem, as summarized by William of Malmesbury, offers a specific source for four related and otherwise unexplained ideas in the Lance passage of the *Roland*. With the exception of the Exeter record, all the others connect the Lance relic with Carolingian tradition. They have, therefore, considerably more pertinence for the Lance passage than the Antioch relic which alone has figured in previous discussions of the *Roland*. The Antioch Lance was, of course, always devoid of the slightest Carolingian association.

THE ANTIOCH LANCE

On June 14, 1098, the "Lancea Salvatoris" was, according to contemporary reports, discovered at Antioch. In 1902 that discovery became especially important in *Roland* scholarship. In an archaeologically unsound book on the Bayeux Embroidery, Marignan²⁸ asserted that the Lance passage alone would serve to date the poem after 1098. For him, as for other writers, alike eager to find in the poem signs of the influence of the Crusades, the immense popular enthusiasm aroused by the discovery best accounted for the poet's appropriation of the idea of such a relic. In his severe review of Marignan's book, Gaston Paris (*Romania*, XXI [1902], 411) came to an opposite conclusion. After the discovery, he thought, "on ne pouvait songer à placer la pointe de la sainte Lance dans le pommeau de l'épée de Charlemagne." The poem must, therefore, have been composed before 1098. This conflict of essentially subjective opinion brought the problem no nearer to solution.

A more factual character was given to the discussion in 1927 in Bédier's *Commentaires* on the *Roland* (pages 42-43). He attacked Gaston Paris' theory with vigor. Relying on the disconcerting evidence offered by Fulcher of Chartres and Raoul de Caen, Bédier argued that after the fatal ordeal by fire to which

²⁸ A. Marignan, *La Tapisserie de Bayeux, étude archéologique et critique*, Paris, 1902, p. 154.

Peter Bartholomew (d. 1099), who discovered the relic, had submitted himself, faith in it was lost and it soon disappeared from public view. Soon after Peter's death, therefore, "un poète pouvait donc avec tranquillité se permettre . . . d'enchâsser la pointe dans . . . Joyeuse" (page 42). A note on the same page added: "Voici une justification amusante de ce dire. Guillaume de Malmesbury affirme sans sourciller que Hughes Capet possédait la lance de Charlemagne . . . 'que ferebatur esse lancea que lateri Christi fuit infixā.' . . . Sur quoi Aubry de Trois Fontaines (*Mon. Ger. Hist. Script.*, XXIII, 773) proteste que c'est impossible: 'quia . . . illa lancea primum in Anthiocha fuit inventa.' D'où il résulte qu'il tenait pour authentique la relique d'Antioche, lui qui écrivait un siècle et demi après l'aventure du prêtre Barthélemy, mais que Guillaume de Malmesbury n'attachait à ladite relique aucune importance, lui qui écrivait vingt-cinq ans seulement après."

In these remarks, of course, it is evident that Bédier, like so many other scholars before him, had paid no attention to William's own account of his ancient source or to Stubbs's complete acceptance of that source, an acceptance still further confirmed by more recent historians. Since William was simply recounting what he had found in a tenth-century poem, in no wise can it be said that he was so affected by disbelief in the Antioch relic that he could, "sans sourciller," assign the Lance relic to Charlemagne's possession.

Since William's supposed attitude to the relic was linked by Bédier to that of the author of the *Chanson de Roland*, since both writers were supposed to have been so informed about the discrediting of the Antioch Lance, we must pause to consider this assumption too. We do not know exactly when or where the French poet was writing, but William was writing at Malmesbury before 1125. What of his knowledge of Raoul de Caen and Fulcher of Chartres, the only two writers cited by Bédier for evidence of current scepticism about the Antioch relic? Raoul's *Gesta Tancredi*, written mainly between 1112-1118, survives in only one manuscript (Brussels, Royal Library, Cod. MS 5374), the author's own working copy.²⁹ Its date, the lack of any sign of early diffusion, make it altogether improbable that a copy of this work,

²⁹ I rely on Bédier's own precise account of this manuscript (*La Chanson de Roland, commentée*, p. 56, n. 2). He noted that certain leaves, in Raoul's hand, show that Raoul was still at work on this MS as late as 1130, a date to which these leaves refer. The MS cannot then have been out of Raoul's possession.

still unfinished in 1130, could have reached Malmesbury before 1125. There is no evidence that it was known to William or to the French poet. The *Gesta Tancredi*³⁰ itself, in likening Robert of Flanders and Hugh of Vermandois at Dorylaeum to Roland and Oliver, made one of the well-known early allusions to the *Roland*.³¹ Although Raoul de Caen's account of the discovery of the Antioch Lance, of the discrediting of its finder by his ordeal and death, was by all odds the most devastating, the most violently partisan attack on the authenticity of the relic, there is no reason to believe it was known to either one of the writers with whom we are here concerned.

For Fulcher of Chartres the case is, at first glimpse, altogether different.³² William of Malmesbury (*GRA*, II; 434) explicitly refers to his work. As Stubbs (II, cxix) noted, Fulcher was William's chief source for his account of the First Crusade, an account in which, however, William made no reference to the famous Antioch discovery. Stubbs remarked, in a footnote on page cxix: "It is possible that William knew Fulcher through the abridgment, *Gesta Francorum Obsidentium*," or (page cxxv) the *Gesta Francorum Expugnantium Jerusalem*. Stubbs here called attention to several stories reported by William which did not appear in Fulcher's original account but did appear in these later redactions. For us it is important to note that in these versions Fulcher's account of the Lance is so abbreviated as to be of no importance. Upon analysis it is very difficult to believe that Fulcher's original account, always brief at best and somewhat reluctant in tone,³³ much less these still briefer later redactions,

³⁰ All allusions to the Latin chronicles of the First Crusade are to the *Recueil des historiens des Croisades: historiens occidentaux*, Paris, 1844-1855 (= *Recueil*). For English translations, accompanied by valuable historical notes, see August Krey, *The First Crusade: the Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, Princeton, University Press, 1921. Though Raoul de Caen was not present at the discovery of the Antioch Lance or at the ordeal of Peter Bartholomew, his vivid account of these episodes (*Recueil*, III, 676, 682), from a violently partisan, Norman point of view, was included, because of its interest, in Krey's translations.

³¹ *Recueil*, III, 627; cf. Fawtier, *op cit.*, p. 67.

³² *Recueil*, III, 311-485; for the Lance story, pp. 344-345. The first redaction of Fulcher's work was composed between 1109-1133, the second between 1118-1124, according to H. Hagenmeyer in his edition of Fulcher's *Historia Hierosolymitana*, Heidelberg, 1913, p. 48. William of Malmesbury must then have used the second redaction since he referred to an event of 1123 (*GRA*, II, 452), also noted by Fulcher.

³³ The mildness of Fulcher's tone may be judged from his conclusion: "Since everybody had venerated that Lance for the honor and love of God, after judgment was thus accomplished [by Peter's ordeal], those who formerly appeared credulous of this culprit remained incredulous. Nevertheless, Count Raymond [of Toulouse]

could have had the immediate and overwhelming effect which Bédier supposed.

In contrast to these two sceptical accounts, there is massive evidence as to the early diffusion of sympathetic accounts of the relic.³⁴ The Anonymous who wrote between 1099-1101 his *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*,³⁵ gave a long, detailed, joyously convinced description of the finding of what was to him this true relic; as is well recognized, almost every other account of the First Crusade was based on his,³⁶ and in almost every one the story of the Lance was related with equal sympathy. Of one account, written shortly before 1107 by Robert the Monk, over eighty manuscripts survive, a convincing indication of its popularity and diffusion.³⁷ Abbot Guibert of Nogent, writing between 1104 and 1121, not only borrowed much from the Anonymous but in his version of the Lance episode³⁸ added the story of Peter Bartholomew's ordeal and interpreted its fatal outcome, as the passionately credulous Provençal, Raymond of Aguilers, had done before him, not as a result of the burns on Peter's body, but of the wounds he had received from the multitude who believed in him and wished to touch him. Guibert asked tauntingly if Fulcher, who was not present at the discovery of the

kept it a long time after that" (translated by Martha McGinty, *Fulcher of Chartres, Chronicle of the First Crusade*, Book I, Philadelphia, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1941, p. 49). In his first redaction, Fulcher combined in one brief narrative the discovery and the ordeal, two events separated in time by about ten months. In later redactions the two stories were separated and condensed. Cf. *Recueil*, III, 502, 507.

³⁴ Cf. H. Hagenmeyer, *La Chronologie de la première Croisade*, Paris, 1902, pp. 60-61, 167-169, 220, 224, for the bibliography of the Lance episode. Krey (op. cit., p. 296, n. 22) remarked on the baffling silence of the Anonymous and of other writers who were doubtless present at the ordeal. They accepted the authenticity of the Lance at the time of its discovery. Since Krey's one volume translated these writers but lacks an index, I give the following page references to accounts of the Lance: Anonymous, pp. 174-176; Raymond of Aguilers, pp. 176-182, 185-188, 198-202, 210-212, 228-233 (ordeal), 236-237; letters from the clergy and princes, pp. 190, 191-92, 193, 276. See above, note 30.

³⁵ *Histoire anonyme de la première Croisade*, éd. et tr. par L. Bréhier, Paris, 1924, pp. 132-135, 146-147.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xvi; Krey, op. cit., pp. 7, 282, 296; Beatrice Lees, *Anonymi Gesta Francorum*, Oxford, 1924, pp. xi-xii.

³⁷ Krey, op. cit., p. 13; Bréhier (op. cit., p. xxi) spoke of "une centaine de manuscrits."

³⁸ *Recueil*, IV, 252. Krey (op. cit., p. 296, n. 23), in commenting on Guibert, noted the severity of the rebuke to Fulcher which is quoted above. I am indebted to Prof. Albert Friend for his help in solving here and elsewhere some of the difficulties of Guibert's involved style.

Lance or at the ordeal, should enjoy more credence than those who were? "Shall the shrewdness of Fulcher, the priest, now have more importance than the characters (? *ingeniis*) of so many careful witnesses who were present when the Lance was found, that Fulcher, who, while our people were being imperilled by hunger at Antioch, feasted himself and made holiday at Edessa?" Altogether, so far as the first part of the twelfth century gives evidence, the whole balance of record in the number and diffusion of sympathetic accounts of the discovery, accounts which regularly omit or abbreviate mention of the ordeal, makes one doubt Bédier's conclusion. The scepticism felt at Antioch in 1099 did *not* permeate the West. The French clerics who, for the most part, were the historians of the First Crusade, were not interested in telling about the discrediting of a holy relic which practically all of them had accepted at the time of its discovery.

Since Bédier's argument concerning immediate and widespread Western scepticism about the Antioch Lance seems then untenable, we return to Gaston Paris' theory. As Bédier himself admitted, if faith in the relic did prevail in the West, then such a reference to the Passion Lance as occurs in the *Roland* would have seemed "presque sacrilège," for Charlemagne could not have possessed what had so recently been found at Antioch.. The poet must, therefore, have written before, not after, 1098. In the phraseology of today any writer, for a long time after that date, would have been inhibited by the very fame of the Antioch relic. This was Gaston Paris' implicit argument; he gave no actual evidence for it. Yet he of all men, in 1902, was familiar with three accounts which establish, better than any amount of commentary, the fact of that inhibition among actual twelfth-century writers. In these stories, of widely different character and purpose but all dating from that century and all three concerned with the same matter, *i.e.* Charlemagne's acquisition of Passion Relics, the Lance was conspicuous by its absence. Yet it was surely as holy, as precious as were the other Passion Relics, and the authors of these accounts were surely no less audacious than was the author of the panegyric to Athelstan. Yet something constrained the three twelfth-century writers and we can only believe it was the fame of the Antioch relic that forced each one of them to omit the Lance. In commenting on one of these narratives, the *Descriptio Qualiter Karolus Magnus Clavum et Coronam Domini a Con-*

stantinopoli Aquis Grani Detulerit,³⁹ Professor Ronald Walpole has recently observed: "The discovery of the Lance in Antioch had a tremendous effect on the whole of Western Christendom. . . . It is easy to imagine why the author of the *Descriptio*, at a time when the chroniclers of the First Crusade were eagerly describing Pierre Barthélemy's experience, forbore to include the Lance among the relics which Charlemagne was said to have brought back from Constantinople."⁴⁰ In that other account of Charlemagne's fabulous journey to the East, the merry, mocking, "Baroque epic," as it has been called, the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* (ca. 1109-1150),⁴¹ the Lance is likewise omitted. It is also missing from the *Fierabras* (ca. 1170),⁴² which tells how Charlemagne, not by Eastern journey and gift, but by grim warfare, acquired the Passion Relics looted by the Saracens from Rome. Never, in any twelfth-century version of these stories, did the Lance appear. When it was first added, in two versions of the *Descriptio* that dated from about the middle of the thirteenth century, it was plainly an addition that had nothing to do with any older form of this story.

THE LANCE OF MOUSKÉS AND THE *KARLAMAGNUS SAGA*

A continental French version of the *Descriptio* appeared in the *Chronique rimée*⁴³ of Philip Mouskés who was writing about

³⁹ *Descriptio*, ed. G. Rauschen, *Die Legende des Karl des Grossen*, Leipzig, 1890; for Latin MSS of the *Descriptio*, see Nothomb, *Romania*, LVI (1930), 191-211. Bédier (*Légendes*, IV, 125) dated the *Descriptio* shortly before 1124. See the following note.

⁴⁰ "Charlemagne and Roland," *Univ. of California Publ. in Modern Philology*, XXI (1944), 416; pages 387, 396-402 give the most recent and authoritative study of the *Descriptio*. In Walpole's later work in the same series, "Philip Mouskés and the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle," XXVI (1947), 362, he remarked: "The questions of the date [of the *Descriptio*], its origin, authorship, and of its relation to the epic poem on the same theme, *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, have only been given very tentative answers." Cf. also pp. 354, 365-367, 398, 400.

⁴¹ *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, ed. Anna J. Cooper, Paris, 1925. For the most recent bibliography, cf. Urban Holmes, "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* and William of Malmesbury," *Symposium* (Nov. 1946), p. 75. On p. 78 he observed that of the thirteen relics listed in the *Pèlerinage*, only five correspond to those listed in the *Descriptio*, i.e., the Arm of St. Simeon, a Nail of the Passion, a bit of the Crown of Thorns, the *sudarium* of Christ, the Virgin's shift.

⁴² *Fierabras*, ed. Kroeber et Servois, Paris, 1860. Bédier (*Légendes*, IV, 164) pointed out that the author of *Fierabras* borrowed from the *Descriptio* the miracle of certain relics hanging in the air. Cf. Urban Holmes, *History of Old French Literature*, Chapel Hill, N. C., 1937, p. 80, for the so-called "cycle of the relics."

⁴³ Ed. par Baron de Reiffenberg, 2 vols., Brussels, 1845. Quotations are from this edition. For the date of the *Chronique*, see Walpole, *Mouskés*, p. 428, n. 18.

1240. This well-to-do layman of Tournai was so in love with Carolingian story that he devoted about a third of his chronicle to it. We now know, thanks to Professor Walpole's illuminating study, *Philip Mouskés and the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, that Mouskés, unscholarly and pedestrian as he was, did not use Latin but French versions of that narrative. Seven of these French versions, the earliest dating from about 1200, are known.⁴⁴ About that time Pierre de Beauvais made a French translation of the *Descriptio*; the two translations were sometimes copied together; sometimes the French *Turpin* was interpolated by an abbreviated version of Pierre's *Descriptio*.⁴⁵ Professor Walpole⁴⁶ thinks it was some one of these Pierre versions that Mouskés used. Whatever his source, we can feel sure that it, like all known antecedent Latin and French versions of the *Descriptio*, did not include the Lance. The Lance of Longinus was, however, assuredly in Mouskés' own mind when he came to his version of Charlemagne's acquisition of the Passion Relics; he had already, as the following selections show, twice referred to Longinus and his Lance (verses 6785, 10776). When he added that Lance to the usual *Descriptio* list of relics (verses 11454 ff.), the repetition of his earlier twice-used *costé:tasté* rhyme indicates that here, as so often elsewhere, he was merely repeating himself.

I, 269, verses 6785 ff.

*Tot autresi com ot Longis,
Ki del cop ne fu pas engis
Dont li ot perciet le costé;
Et quant il ot le sanc tasté
Ki parmi la lance couloit, . . .*

I, 417, verses 10776 ff.

*Longis le feri el costé,
Et, quant il ot le sanc tasté,
A ses ious touça, s'ot vé
Qu'il onques mais n'avait éue.*

I, 441, verses 11454 ff.

*Encore ot Karles moult grignor
Sanctuaire del vrai signor;
Ce fu del sanc ki s'espandi
Quant Longius l'ot ens el costé
Feru de la lance et tasté.
Et de cele lance méisme
Ki fu glourose et saintisme,
Ot il le fier et s'ot del fust
Dont nus malades qui la fust
N'ot enferté, puis qu'il touça
Al saintuaire n'aprocha.*

It is generally believed that Mouskés did not know the Oxford *Roland* but that he drew extensively on some lost ver-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

⁴⁵ Walpole, *Charlemagne and Roland*, pp. 397-400.

⁴⁶ Walpole, *Mouskés*, p. 428.

sion.⁴⁷ His lines on the Lance indicate no debt to the Lance passage known to us. He borrowed from himself what he had to say about Longinus; for the rest he seems to have added, on his own initiative, the Lancehead, like so many other things, to his wildly expanded list of the relics Charlemagne acquired in the East.

The second version of the *Descriptio* to contain the Lance relic was in still another huge compilation of Carolingian story. The *Karlamagnus Saga*,⁴⁸ written in Old Norwegian prose, drew its various stories from manuscripts written in England and for the most part in Anglo-Norman. The first compilation in nine branches, represented by manuscripts A and *a*, is supposed to have been made before 1250, in the time of the famous King Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1265), a ruler who cultivated close diplomatic, commercial, and cultural relations with England; the second version, distinguished chiefly by the addition of one new branch (II) and many expansions and small changes and represented by manuscripts B and *b*, must be dated after 1287, possibly after 1300.⁴⁹ In Unger's edition, the only one in print of the whole *Saga*, there are ten branches. They make up a cyclic collection of stories about Charlemagne from his youth to his death.

In two of these branches there are allusions to Charlemagne's possession of the Lance relic. The first comes in Branch I, chapter 50 (Unger, page 44), in an account of Charlemagne's eastern journey based on some French version of the *Descriptio*. In a second version of the same story in Branch X, chapter 1 (Unger, page 547) based, so the *Saga* says, on Vincent of Beauvais, there is, as in all traditional versions, no mention of the Lance. Nor, to judge from all comparable texts, can there have been any mention of it in the French version used by the compiler of Branch I. There was none in the French version made for

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 406. Cf. R. C. Bates, "Mouskés Seven Centuries Ago," *Essays in Honor of Albert Feuillerat, Yale Romanic Studies*, XXII (1943), 33, n. 11; F. Hasselmann, *Ueber die Quellen . . . von Mousket*, Göttingen, 1916, pp. 44-48, 58.

⁴⁸ *Karlamagnus Saga*, ed. C. Unger, Christiania, 1860. Henry G. Leach (*Angevin Britain and Scandinavia*, Cambridge, Mass., 1921, pp. 238-254) summarized the *Saga* and commented on its sources. For a French summary, see Gaston Paris, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, Paris, 1864, pp. 89-123.

⁴⁹ Nearly all comment on the date of the two redactions has derived from Unger's own brief comment, pp. iii-iv. Cf. Paris, *op. cit.*, p. 90; Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 238; H. M. Smyser and F. Magoun, *Survivals in Old Norwegian*, Baltimore, 1941, pp. v-vi.

Renaud, Count of Boulogne, who came in exile to England in 1212 and may have brought this version with him.⁵⁰ But the Norse translator interpolated into whatever source he used, a passage taken from the *Roland*, a fact long ago pointed out by Jules Coulet.⁵¹ From his French translation of the *Saga's* Norse version of the *Descriptio*, I quote the Lance passage. It comes just after Charlemagne's refusal in Constantinople of rich treasures. He says he would prefer to have some relics of the Passion. Thereupon the Greek emperor gave him

la pointe de la Lance (de Notre Seigneur) qui lui avait percé le flanc, et la lance de saint Mercure. . . . Charlemagne garda pour lui la lance (*i.e.* of St. Mercurius) et la pointe de la Lance. Il les fit placer dans le pommeau de son épée. Pour cela il l'appela Joyeuse (Giovisse) en raison du don qu'il lui avait fait. De là vient que tous ses chevaliers crient Montjoie (Mungeoy), quand ils s'excitent au combat (Coulet, pages 132 f.).

Coulet (pages 135, 159) was right in noting that the Lance relic, the names Giovisse and Mungeoy, were mentioned in the same terms, with the same details, that they have in the Oxford *Roland*. It is a plain borrowing, a plain interpolation, in this Norse *Descriptio*. Together the two texts, the French *Roland* and a French *Descriptio*, would account wholly for the passage quoted from the *Saga*, were it not for that one odd additional relic, the Lance of St. Mercurius.

This saint⁵² was altogether unknown to the authors of the *Roland* and the *Descriptio*, but not to the compilers of the *Saga*. In Branch IV, chapter 72, a story was told of him that was drawn from a legend of the First Crusade;⁵³ in various chronicles re-

⁵⁰ Walpole, *Charlemagne and Roland*, p. 407.

⁵¹ Jules Coulet, *Études sur le voyage de Charlemagne en Orient*, Montpellier, 1907, p. 135.

⁵² Coulet's remarks (p. 157) about St. Mercurius were wholly conjectural. For an admirable study of the early history of the legend, see Stéphane Binon, *Essai sur le cycle de Saint-Mercure*, Paris, 1937. (Bibl. de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences Religieuses, LIII, 1-144). For the later history, see my article, "The St Mercurius Legend in Medieval England and Norse Saga."

⁵³ *Karlamagnus Saga*, ed. Unger, Branch IV, p. 255. In this Norse version of the *Chanson d'Aspremont*, the three saints, Georgius, Mercurius, Demetrius, come to the help of Oddgeir and Rollant. Cf. Roelf van Waard, *Études sur l'origine et la formation de la Chanson d'Aspremont*, Groningen, 1937, pp. 158, 183. The story came from a legendary episode of the First Crusade. Cf. *Histoire anonyme*, ed. Bréhier, p. 154. In some accounts of this episode the names of Mauricius and Mercurius are interchanged. Cf. Binon, *op. cit.*, p. 99, n. 1.

ording the legend his name and that of St. Mauricius were sometimes interchanged. This precedent may have been known to the Norse compiler of Branch I, but there can be no doubt that he found the name of St. Mauricius in another source used by him and that he exchanged the two names. This other source was the story of the Gifts to Athelstan, the one story which not only associated the Passion Lance with Charlemagne but likewise the *vexillum* or bannered lance of St. Mauricius:⁵⁴

vexillum Mauricii beatissimi martyris, . . . quo idem rex [Charlemagne] in bello magno Hispano quamlibet infestos . . . inimicorum cuneos dirumpere, et in fugam solitus erat cogere (*GRA*, I, 150).

The belief that it was the Gift Story which here inspired the Norse redactor to give Charlemagne a second lance relic, is confirmed by another borrowing in Branch VIII. This gives the *Saga's* version of the whole *Roland*, from a source which Bédier (*Légendes*, III, 359) thought close to O. In the *Saga's* lines corresponding to O, *laisse* CLXXXIII, we find not only the Passion Lance but also another Passion Relic, this time the Holy Nail. I quote from Koschwitz's careful German translation of this Norse *Roland*.⁵⁵

Der König legte seine Rüstung nicht ab; er stellte sein Schild zu seinem Haupte und war in der Brünne und mit dem guten Schwerte umgürtet welches Jouis heisst; das war mit 30 Farben an jeden Tage; und er hat einen Nagel, womit unser Herr an das Kreuz geheftet wurde, in dem Knaufe des Schwertes, und der oberste Theil war ein Stück von der Lanze des Herrn, womit er verwundet wurde.

The addition of this Holy Nail to what must have been the somewhat overcrowded sword hilt of Joyeuse, proves that the Gift Story here, as before in Branch I, was known to the Norse compilers. It alone could have suggested both the second lance relic assigned to Charlemagne and also the Holy Nail for the sword hilt. The Gift Story was probably known to these compilers, as were most of the stories used by them, in some Anglo-Norman form,⁵⁶ some early translation of William of Malmesbury's

⁵⁴ For further discussion of the *vexillum* of St. Mauricius, see above, note 18.

⁵⁵ E. Koschwitz, "Der altnordische *Roland*," *Romanische Studien*, ed. E. Boehmer, III (1878), 344. I am greatly indebted to Professor Margaret Schlauch for her expert help in translating Unger's text and comments.

⁵⁶ Cf. the Anglo-Norman version in *Le Livre de Reis de Engleterre*, ed. J.

famous Chronicle. From the last part of the twelfth century it would have been easy to have access to such a text or, of course, to the numerous copies of William's original Latin text. But there is no reason to suppose that the original panegyric to Athelstan, the poem shut away in the archives of Malmesbury, was ever used by the Norse compilers.

The case seems different, however, for the author of the *Chanson de Roland*, though doubtless those who date the poem after 1125⁵⁷ will deny that difference. They will say that the (for them) twelfth-century poet, like the thirteenth-century Norse compilers, made an independent borrowing from William of Malmesbury's account of the Gifts to Athelstan. They may, perhaps, grant the veracity of the historian's reference to his ancient source and grant its survival at Malmesbury to his day, but they will be as reluctant to admit that the French poet, in the source of MS O, might have read it before 1100-1125, as they are to admit any other argument for dating the *Roland* before that time.

This is not the place to review again the arguments for that earlier dating. They can be found in the last article of Pauphilet (*supra*, note 2), in the *Roland, étude historique (op. cit.)* of M. Fawtier, and others. So far as the Lance passage is concerned, the present article has sought to show the untenableness of certain previous assertions about the influence of the First Crusade on the *Roland*, about the supposedly contemporary origin of war cries and gonfanons, and especially about the supposed immediate rejection, by Western writers, of the authenticity of the Antioch Lance. We return to the opinion of Gaston Paris that after 1098 it would, for a rather long period, have been impossible, as, in point of fact, three twelfth-century authors prove, for a writer to assign to Charlemagne possession of the Passion Lance. From 1098 to the mid-thirteenth century, we have found no writer concerned with stories of Charlemagne's acquisition of the Passion Relics who ventured to add the Lance to them. Fundamental, too, I think, to the true interpretation of the Lance passage, is the *Roland* poet's own insistence on the connection between the Lance relic and Joyeuse and Monjoie. No mount, no hill, howsoever holy, was in his thought, but only that joy of Paradise to which the Lance had opened the way. We have found

Glover, Rolls Series, London, 1865, p. 64. I hope to publish a much earlier version in connection with tracing the later history and influence of the story in England.

⁵⁷ See *supra*, notes 1 and 2.

some reason to believe that the history of a Passion Lance relic can be traced in France in the ninth and tenth centuries, and that this relic or some substitute for it was sent in 926 from France to England. It was this relic, which, according to the tenth-century panegyric to Athelstan, had once belonged to Charlemagne. This idea, together with three others associated with it in the Lance passage, the *Roland* poet seems to have borrowed at some time between 1066⁵⁸ and 1098. In that case, for all that he was, as Bédier⁵⁹ has so eloquently argued, “un Franc de France,” he must at some time have been in England where alone he could have seen the Anglo-Latin poem.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Cf. *Roland*, vss. 2331-2332, where Roland recalls his conquest of England and Scotland. On this apparent reminiscence of the Norman Conquest, see Fawtier, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

⁵⁹ Bédier, *La Chanson de Roland, commentée*, pp. 37-40.

⁶⁰ Space does not permit us to do more than recall here that the Turolodus whose name appears as a kind of signature to the *Roland* (vs. 4002), was identified in 1850 by Génin (pp. lxxi-lxxxv, *supra*, n. 15) as the sometime monk of Fécamp who became, by order of William the Conqueror, the abbot of Malmesbury, 1066-1069, and was then sent to defend Peterborough, as its abbot, against Hereward the Wake. Like all other identifications of Turolodus, Génin's has been rejected, but it may be worth re-examination.

THE ATHELSTAN GIFT STORY: ITS INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH CHRONICLES AND CAROLINGIAN ROMANCES*

To saints and their relics in the Middle Ages great men did great reverence. The mighty Charlemagne zealously collected and distributed relics of Christ and the saints; so, too, did the noble King Athelstan of England, who was, to his own contemporaries, something of "an English Charlemagne." Certain tales relating to these two famous rulers and the holy relics acquired by them, are full of interest in themselves and in the relationship, at special stages, of the stories to each other. The Continental Carolingian narratives—the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, the *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus clavum et coronam Domini a Constantinopoli Aquis Grani detulerit*, the *Fierabras*¹ tell how Charlemagne, either on a fabulous journey to the East, or by warfare in Spain, got a hoard of precious relics which included some from the Crucifixion but never, in the oldest versions of these stories, any part of the Passion Lance. An ancient story, of English origin, tells how Athelstan received, as a gift from France, a hoard which likewise included some Passion relics. Among the gifts was the Passion Lance which was said to have belonged to Charlemagne; there was also the *vexillum* of St. Mauricius. For the Carolingian stories named above there is no extant text that antedates the latter half of the twelfth century, no conjectured source that antedates the latter half of the eleventh century. The Athelstan Gift Story, as we shall call it, was first set forth in an Anglo-Latin poem eulogizing the English king (d. 939). This panegyric was quoted and summarized by William of Malmes-

* From *PMLA*, LXVII (1952), 521-537. By permission of the Editor.

¹ For bibliography and comment on these narratives see *A Critical Bibliography of French Literature, I: The Medieval Period*, ed. Urban Holmes (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1947); also his *History of Old French Literature* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1937), and his article in *Sym.*, I (Nov. 1947), 75-81: "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* and William of Malmesbury."

bury (1125) and is now accepted, though it was long ignored, as an authentic tenth century source.² It may have been this almost unknown poem which inspired in the *Chanson de Roland*, in that earliest Anglo-Norman copy known as the *Oxford Roland*, four concepts connected with Charlemagne's reported possession of a bit of the Passion Lance.³ Our concern here, however, is not with the ancient Latin poem, but with the version of its Gift Story by William of Malmesbury. To it he gave new life, new currency; its influence can be traced in various chronicles and in certain English Carolingian romances. It throws new light on their development and relationships. Strangely enough, it was in these English Carolingian stories and not in their Continental sources and analogues that the idea that Charlemagne had once possessed the Passion Lance took root and flourished.

William of Malmesbury's account of the rich gifts brought to Athelstan when the mighty Hugh of France sought the hand of Eadhild, Athelstan's beautiful sister, appeared in all the Latin copies of the *Gesta Regum Anglorum*. From them it passed into other Latin chronicles of English origin which borrowed extensively from William's work. In France, though the story was known through the *Gesta Regum*,⁴ it was ignored. Since it told of the sending out of France of priceless relics, two of which were supposed to have belonged to Charlemagne, it was not a tale likely to be repeated save with the incredulity expressed by Aubri de Trois Fontaines (*Mon. Ger. Hist. SS.*, XXIII, 773).

But in England it was a matter of pride to record that these and other wonderful gifts had been sent from France to England.

² Comments of various historians on this Latin poem are given in my article, "The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Athelstan," which also gives further historical and literary reasons for the date. For William of Malmesbury's summary and quotations from the poem see his *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Ser. (London, 1887-89), I, 144-145, 150-152. In his Introduction, II, lxi-lxx, Stubbs fully accepted the antiquity of the poem, but his remarks on it, like those of William himself, have been generally ignored. Its tenth-century origin is, however, recognized without question by so recent and authoritative an historian as F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1947), pp. 315, n. 1; 335, n. 1; 686, 688.

³ See my article, "The Passion Lance Relic and the War Cry *Monjoie* in the *Chanson de Roland* and Related Texts."

⁴ William's *De Gestis Regum* appeared as Item 6 in MS. 17656 (Paris, B.N. Fonds lat., ff. 57-109). This St.-Denis MS., of great importance for French historiography, was written soon after 1179, according to C. Meredith-Jones, *Pseudo-Turpin* (Paris, 1936), pp. 5-6, or soon after 1184, according to H. M. Smyser, *The Pseudo-Turpin* (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), pp. 52-53. The Gift Story was, therefore, known in France before the end of the twelfth century.

William's own version of the Gift Story was retold in variant forms. Since both William's original Latin (Rolls Series, 1887, I, 150) and the modern English translation by J. A. Giles (Bohn's Libraries, London, 1889, pp. 135-137) are easily available, I give here one of the earliest Anglo-Norman translations of the Gift Story. The text is reproduced from a photostat of that early thirteenth-century MS., Cotton Caligula A IX, f.231⁵ (f.228), which also contains Layamon's *Brut* and the *Owl and the Nightingale*. It was printed in 1886 by John Koch under the title, *Ein anglonormannischer Geschichtsauszug, Li rei de Engleterre* (Berlin), but aside from Stengel's comment on it in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, VII (1886), 994, this little brochure of 36 pages seems to have escaped notice and the text was lost. The only available text has been the one printed by J. Glover⁶ from a much later MS. and a more condensed version than that in the Cotton MS. It was the early version of *Le Livere de reis d'Engleterre* or *Reis*, as we shall call it, which seems chiefly to have influenced the earliest chronicles in Middle English. It may also have affected the *Karlamagnus Saga*,⁷ of which the first compilation was made from Anglo-Norman sources before 1250.

THE ATHELSTAN GIFT STORY IN ANGLO-NORMAN AND IN MIDDLE ENGLISH CHRONICLES

Li Reis d'Engleterre (Cotton Caligula A IX, f. 231)

La renume de sa [i.e., Athelstan's]
 valer e de sa gentrise fu expandue par
 mutes terres. Il en aveit une seorur.
 Ethilde aveit nun. Unkes hume
 ki la veist ne vit plus bele femme.

5

⁵ In transcribing the text I have modernized the capitalization of names, the usage of u and v, and corrected in a few instances the scribe's mistaken separation of words. I am indebted to Professor Ruth Dean for several helpful suggestions and for the information that the story reappears in Trevet's *Chronicles* (after 1334). In the version in MS. Magdalen 45, f. 70, the French suitor who sends the gifts is not Hugh of France but "Lowis prince daquitayne," who did in fact marry one of Athelstan's sisters.

⁶ *Le Livere de Reis de Brittanie e le Livere de Reis de Engleterre*, ed. John Glover, Rolls Ser. (London, 1845), pp. 64-66, from a late thirteenth-century MS., Trinity Coll., Cambridge, R. 14. 7. Stengel (*loc. cit.*) mentioned five other MSS., unknown to Koch or Glover, which likewise contained *Li reis de Engleterre*. See below, n. 8. A new edition is greatly to be desired.

⁷ For the use of the Gift Story in the *Karlamagnus Saga* see my article, "The Saint Mercurius Legend in Medieval England and in Norse Saga."

Cil oit dire li reis de France Hige. Si en-
 veat la ses messagers. Ceo fu le cun-
 te de Boloine. Eldulf le fiz le cunte Baud-
 win de Flandres, & nevou le rei Elfret
 le sage, de sa fille Ed'elswit. Ci vint
 al rei Ethelstan a Abendone u il aveit 10
 grant assemblee de riches hummes. dit
 sun message. demanda sa seurur al
 eos le rei de France. Pus mist avant
 les presens, chevaus cururs tuz ense-
 lez e enfrenez, peres precieuses de tute 15
 manere. Le espeie Costantin al empere-
 ur. e sun nun en l'espeie a lettres de or.
 el chapele de l'espeie ke fu de fin or. un
 des clous dunt Nostre Sires fu fiche en
 la croiz. La lance Charlemaine k'il 20
 suleit porter cunte Sarazins. ke
 lem quidat ke fust cele dunt Nostre Sire
 fu feru. Car unkes ne fu levee en
 bataille, ke ne fust vencue. le gun-
 fanun seint Moriz k'il suleit porter 25
 devant cele seinte legiun. ki li rei Char-
 les porta tute sa vie encuntre pains.
 une partie de la veraie croiz enclos en
 un cristal. une partie de la curune de
 espine ke fu mise al chef Nostre Seignur. 30
 une curune reale de fin or. u tant a-
 veit peres precieuses. e teles ke n'aveit
 hume nul ki afichement les a gar-
 dait pur la resplendisur. e plus valei-
 ent les peres. ke ne feseit l'or. Li 35
 rireis Ethelstan s'eslecat mut de ces
 riches presenz. enveat lui sa seurur
 k'il tant desirat od riches duns
 e od riches presenz. Sesse anz tint le
 regne noblement si murut e gist 40
 a Maumbures.

The text here given omits any reference to the secular
 treasures, the wonderful perfumes, the shining emeralds, the
 richly chased *vas ex onichino*, which in William's own version

were so vividly described. But it keeps what had been told there about the embassy and the relics brought from France, the sword of Constantine with a Nail of the Passion in its golden hilt, the invincible Lance of Charlemagne that was said to have been the Passion Lance itself, and the *gonfanon* of *seint Moriz*, likewise once owned by Charlemagne; also a bit of the true Cross enclosed in crystal and a part of the Crown of Thorns. It names among the gifts, as did William, a golden crown richly set with jewels.

Since no collation has yet been made of the various MSS. of the *Reis*, it is impossible to speak with precision about their relationship to the earliest Middle English chronicles which contain the Gift Story. We find, however, in both the *Anonymous Short English Chronicle*⁸ and in the *Chronicle* attributed to Robert of Gloucester,⁹ the same omissions, the same retentions in the Gift Story, as those noted above. In one matter, however, they both differ from the *Reis*. The late Cambridge MS. says nothing of horses (Glover's ed., p. 64); the Cotton MS. quoted above (l. 15) speaks of horses with jeweled equipment; the two English chronicles alike specify their number and color:

<i>Short Chronicle (A)</i>	Robert of Gloucester
C.C.C. stedes milke white 1626	Verst þreo hundred steden so
In al þis world nas her like.	white so þe swan

Though three hundred was not actually mentioned by William of Malmesbury, it was suggested by him when he wrote of the horses sent to Athelstan: "equos cursores plurimos, cum phaleris, fulvum, ut Maro ait, 'mandentes sub dentibus aurum.'" The quotation probably appeared in William's source, a poem

⁸ Ewald Zett ed., E.E.T.S., No. 196 (London, 1935), pp. 22-25; for comment on the Gift Story, pp. lxxvii ff. Zettl, pp. lxxiii, lxxxii-lxxxv, cxxxii, noted "the marked agreement[s] between our [chronicle] version and the equally short survey *Le livre de Reis* . . . for the period between the political division of England and the time of Canute." Though Zettl spoke of eleven MSS. of the *Reis*, his comparison was based solely on the Cambridge MS. (ed. Glover). The Cotton MS. quoted above agrees much more closely with the *Chronicle*. All quotations from the latter are here given, for textual reasons, from the edition by M. C. Carroll and R. Tuve of the Auchinleck MS. version (A) in *PMLA*, XLVI (1931), 115-154.

⁹ W. A. Wright ed., Rolls Ser. (London, 1887). The Gift Story, II, 830-832, App. EE, is found only in fifteenth-century MSS. containing the second recension of Robert's work. Cf. Wright, I, vii, xi, xliii. His dating of this *Chronicle* "about 1300" p. xi) carefully stated to be merely "probable." He thought (p. viii) the original version was independently completed by different continuators.

strongly influenced by Virgil,¹⁰ but it is evident that anyone capable of identifying Maro as Virgil, might have looked up the reference and found that it concerned the horses of Latinus: "Stabant ter centum nitidi" (*Aeneid*, VII, 275). The precise number thus implied by William may have been specified in some Anglo-Norman version of the Gift Story, perhaps by a marginal note, or it may, as seems still more probable, have been first introduced into one of the two English chronicles and borrowed from that in the other.

The differences between these chronicles, so far as the Gift Story is concerned, make it difficult to believe that the *Short Chronicle* did the borrowing. It kept important details of the original story that were omitted or changed in the Robert version and could not have been derived from that.¹¹ It kept the place name of Abingdon, omitted by Robert; also the name of the French ambassador who was called Adulfus by William, Eldulf in the Anglo-Norman version given above, but by Robert alone was changed to Alain; it kept, in at least two MSS. of the first half of the fourteenth century, MSS. A and R, William's original reference to the Saracens confronted by the banner of St. Maurice, whereas Robert merely mentioned the banner itself; it also preserved, as did the *Reis*, the original place of this gift as coming directly after that of the Passion Lance, a sequence determined by the fact that both relics were said to have belonged to Charlemagne.¹² Robert alone changed the order and put the banner last of all the gifts. Plainly the *Short Chronicle* kept much more nearly to the original Latin Story and to that related in the Anglo-Norman version given above than did the Robert version.¹³ The numerous, obvious likenesses in phraseology and rhymes in this section of the two English chronicles must be accounted for, as the extant MSS. would themselves suggest, as a late borrowing in

¹⁰ *Speculum*, XXV (1950), 439, 452, n. 13.

¹¹ Robert's changes from the Gift Story as preserved by William and the *Short Chronicle* were admitted by Zettl, p. lxxvii. He apparently thought that the *Chronicle* took its phraseology from Robert, its factual details from William.

¹² For comments on this passage, see Zettl, p. lxxvii; Carroll and Tuve, *PMLA*, XLVI, 150. Zettl realized that the conjoined couplets on the Passion Lance and St. Maurice's banner (A, vss. 1636-45, see below) belonged to the original *Short Chronicle* though now missing from all MSS. save A and F. He thought it merely "coincidence" that this sequence agreed with William's.

¹³ Yet Robert, in mentioning the ambassador from France as "the kinges neuuc alfre. þat was wys," seems alone to have preserved here a detail from the *Reis* (see above) which in turn derived it from William (I, 133).

the Robert version. Although the opposite opinion is generally held¹⁴ and is based on the supposed priority of Robert's work, the MSS. show that the Gift Story appeared only in the second recension of his work and only, as noted above (n. 9), in fifteenth-century copies. In the *Short Chronicle* the story was included even in the first version which Zettl (p. cxxx) dated soon after 1307. Of this *Chronicle* we have four fourteenth-century texts, MSS. A, B, R, H. A particularly vigorous and independent version of the whole *Chronicle* appeared in A, the famous Auchinleck MS (1330-40).¹⁵

THE LATIN VERSIONS

Before taking up this Auchinleck version, which was destined to exert a special influence on Middle English romances, we must pause to note certain Latin chronicles of English origin in which the Gift Story was recorded.

Abingdon Abbey was one of the first to appropriate the story for its own purposes. The suggestion for this probably came from William of Malmesbury's remark that Abingdon was the place where Athelstan received the French embassy ("apud Abbandunam," *GRA*, I, 150). In the king's own time whatever monastic establishment was there must have been far too poor and insignificant to have been the recipient, as ultimately it claimed, of the priceless relics given to the king. The lack of any reference to the monastery was counted by Sir Frank Stenton as one of the marks of authenticity in the tenth-century poem which William was using as his source.¹⁶ In 926 Abingdon was part of the royal estate; it had some kind of royal building there, for, in a charter of 993, there is a reference to one as having been built by ancestors of King Æthelred. It was there, presumably, that Athelstan and the Witenagemot met the French embassy and received their gifts. By the twelfth century, of course, Abingdon Abbey had

¹⁴ Zettl, pp. lxxvii, cxxxi f.; Carroll and Tuve, *PMLA*, XLVI, 150; R. Sternberg, "Ueber eine versificirte mittelengl. chronik," *Englische Studien*, XVII (1893), 392-394. J. E. Wells, *Manual of Writings in Middle English* (New Haven, 1916), p. 198, likewise spoke of the Robert *Chronicle* as a principal source of the *Short Chronicle*. A reconsideration of this opinion is desirable.

¹⁵ Zettl, p. xvi, thought the Auchinleck version was composed in 1327 or 1328, and noted, p. cxxxii, that it added about 1,500 lines to the original version.

¹⁶ *The Early History of Abingdon Abbey* (Oxford, 1913), p. 44; pp. 7-8, 38. In his *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 341, Stenton spoke of Abingdon, where Athelstan met the French embassy, as "the site of an ancient monastery then in the king's hands."

grown rich and powerful. But we have now only thirteenth-century MSS. which record the history of the monastery and its abbots.¹⁷ Alike they tell the Gift Story, the monastic *Chronicon* briefly listing a bit of the Crown of Thorns, a Holy Nail, and the *vexillum* of St. Maurice (I, 88). The History of the Abbots had two accounts, one (II, 276 f.) an almost complete transcript of William's text, though now sadly damaged by fire, the other (II, 277) somewhat shorter. This began: "Quae bona Rex Ethelstanus fecit Abbondiae," and ended: "Punctum clavi dedit abbati Godescile, et multa alia ad conservanda in monasterio Abendonae, quae usque hodie in eodem monasterio conservantur."¹⁸

Since these Abingdon versions of the Gift Story were taken from William of Malmesbury, we must conclude that there was no earlier tradition about Athelstan's supposed gift to Abingdon.¹⁹ We may even suspect that Abingdon Abbey did not appropriate the story until the thirteenth century. There is no sign that it was known to the author of that notably pietistic Anglo-Norman romance, *Gui de Warewic*. According to Professor Ewert, this was composed between 1232 and 1242 in the neighborhood of Abingdon,²⁰ and it certainly had much to say of King Athelstan. If the king's supposed donation to the Abbey were already well-known, it would be a little strange for a local author to omit all reference to the precious relics the Abbey associated with his name.

In the fourteenth century the Gift Story was retold in four Latin chronicles: Ranulf Higden's, Henry Knighton's in the anonymous *Liber de Hyda*, and the so-called Ingulph's *Historia Croylandensis*. This last, long since recognized as a late four-

¹⁷ *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. Joseph Stevenson, Rolls Ser. (London, 1858); for the History of the Abbots, see II, App. 2, pp. 276-277; for the MSS., see I, xiv-xv; also Stenton, *History of Abingdon*, pp. 1 ff. H. W. Davis, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, XXIX (1914), 344, accepted Stenton's belief that the oldest MS. of the *Chronicon*, Claud. C IX, represents a transcript of an original completed before 1170, but felt that even in his copy the hand of the forger can be detected.

¹⁸ Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 438: "Godescalc the priest, whom Athelstan placed in charge of the secularized monastery of Abingdon, bore a German name, which was never current in pre-Conquest England." The abbot's name was probably authentic but the king's gift was not. Abingdon knew of the presents only through William of Malmesbury.

¹⁹ Athelstan seems to have given most of the relics he received from France to Exeter Cathedral. Two relics, as noted by William, went to Malmesbury.

²⁰ *Gui de Warewic* (Paris, 1933), (*Les Classiques Français du Moyen Age*), p. vi. E, the oldest MS., now Add. 38662, must have been copied soon after the composition of the romance itself. On the volume to which this MS. once belonged, see below, n. 36.

teenth-century forgery,²¹ may be briefly dismissed. It took the Gift Story from William's version; its omission of the phrase identifying Charlemagne's spear as the Passion Lance in no wise indicated, as F. de Mély once sought to show, a source different from that used by William. De Mély was as unaware of the true nature of William's source as he was of the false nature of Ingulph's chronicle; he labored in vain to establish an Abingdon tradition.²² The three other chronicles are closely related. They are chiefly interesting, so far as the Gift Story is concerned, as showing how new traditions were sometimes made from old, either through carelessness or through a deliberate wish to combine one tale with another.

When Higden, a studious monk at St. Werburgh's Abbey, Chester, undertook to compile his *Polychronicon*,²³ a vast universal history coming down to his own times, he was careful to name various authorities; among them (I, 24) was William of Malmesbury, from whose *Gesta Regum Anglorum* Higden made numerous excerpts. He retold the Gift Story (VI, 424-426) almost in William's own words, but at one point he made a singular contraction. His eye evidently slipped from William's lines telling how the German king, Henry I (the Fowler) had asked for a sister of Athelstan's for his son Otto, to the account, some twenty lines below, of the presents sent to Athelstan. By omitting William's account of Hugh, wrongly called the king of France, the suitor who sent the gifts, Higden thus made them the gift of Otto. Otto did, of course, marry a sister of Athelstan's, but that was not until 936 and he did not become emperor, as Higden termed him, until 962, sixteen years after his wife's death.²⁴ Higden's careless attribution of the gifts to Otto gave rise to a new bit of supposedly historical tradition, a puzzling one indeed since it thus, however preposterously, represented the German emperor as giving away, among other things, the *vexillum* or lance of St. Mauricius. This famous object, by extant record from

²¹ Charles Gross, *The Sources and Literature of English History*, 2nd ed. (London, 1915), p. 247, No. 1371.

²² *Revue de l'art chrétien*, XLVII (1897), 299 ff.; also his *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (Paris, 1904), pp. 91 ff.

²³ *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*, Rolls Ser. (London, 1865-86). This edition included the English translation of Higden by John Trevisa (1387) and another by an unknown writer of the fifteenth century. Cf. Gross, op. cit., p. 371, No. 1793.

²⁴ Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 342.

the eleventh century, had long been a well-known part of the regalia of German kings and emperors.²⁵

Higden's mistake about Otto I together with the rest of his account of the Gift Story passed unchanged into the *Liber de Hyda*.²⁶ A new bit of confusion was added by the appended and erroneous remark, "ut scribit Marianus Scotus." This Irish monk, before he died at Mainz, did write a chronicle to 1082, and this was brought to England before 1095, but in all that is now preserved of it by Florence of Worcester (d. 1118),²⁷ there is only the briefest mention of the marriage of Otto to the English princess. The reference to Marianus in the *Liber de Hyda* seems pure fabrication, for the words of the story were the words Higden had derived from William of Malmesbury, and the mistake about the gift-giver was Higden's own.

Though Higden's mistake was widely diffused through the many copies made of his *Polychronicon*, it did not pass undetected. When Henry Knighton (d. c. 1366), a canon regular of St. Mary's, Leicester, set about writing his own *Chronicon*, he borrowed largely from Higden, to whom in his Preface he paid unstinted praise. But in taking over the Gift Story he turned back to Higden's source and again made Hugh of France, not Otto of Germany, the gift-giver.²⁸ Knighton did a bit of embroidering on the old text by adding a few details out of his own general lore: Constantine, he noted, was the son of St. Helena "quae invenit crucem Domini"; his sword was made "de nobilissimo auro Arabico"; Longinus was named in connection with Charlemagne's spear; from joy of the presents exchanged between Hugh and Athelstan "crevit de die in diem amor et amicitia inter Anglos et Francos." But the most important new element was Knighton's own unique combination of the Gift Story with that of Guy of Warwick's fight with Colbrand, the Danish giant. The hero, as in the original romance, undertook this fight at Athelstan's request, but Knighton alone made him bear arms taken

²⁵ *Speculum*, XXV, 442; A. Hofmeister, *Die heilige Lanze, ein Abzeichen des alten Reich* (Breslau, 1908), Ch. iv. Hofmeister did not know of Higden's reference to the Gift Story but mentioned the *Liber de Hyda* for its reference to Otto the Great.

²⁶ E. Edwards ed., *Rolls Ser.* (London, 1866), pp. 117-118.

²⁷ Gross, *op. cit.*, p. 397, No. 1866. For Florence of Worcester's reference to Otto's marriage see his *Chronicon*, ed. Benjamin Thorpe, *Eng. Hist. Soc.* (London, 1848-49), under the year 937.

²⁸ J. R. Lumby ed., *Rolls Ser.* (London, 1889-95). For the Gift Story, see I, 20 ff.

from the king's treasury, the very arms of the Gift Story which Knighton had already told: "deinde [Guy] fecit se armari de melioribus armaturis regis, et iunxit se gladio Constantini, lanceamque sancti Mauricii in manu tulit" (I, 25). This combat story had been popular since its first appearance in the Anglo-Norman romance of *Gui de Warewic*. By the fourteenth century it had even acquired a certain historicity. Though it had not been mentioned by Higden himself, it had been inserted, in two MSS. of the first edition of the *Polychronicon* (1327), as an incident of Athelstan's reign. The insertion was a Latin translation of the romance made by Gerard of Cornwall (? c. 1350) and incorporated by him as Ch. XI of his own (now lost) *Historia Regum Westsaxonum*²⁹ The chance finding of this insertion in a Higden MS. probably inspired Knighton, when he came to Athelstan's reign, with the idea of combining the story of the gifts with that of the combat. It was a rather neat combination, but it was due entirely to Knighton's own invention.

THE AUCHINLECK MS AND ENGLISH CAROLINGIAN ROMANCES

From these Latin versions of the Gift Story we turn again to its appearance in the *Short Chronicle*, which Zettl (p. cxxxv), in his admirable edition, called "the first English metrical chronicle to be written in the fourteenth century." The earliest version, to 1307, contained the Gift Story but no reference to Guy of Warwick. That was not surprising because, at that date, no English version of his story seems to have appeared; his fame, as a hero of Athelstan's reign, was still limited to the Anglo-Norman romance of 1232-42. But by the time the Auchinleck version of the *Short Chronicle* was composed in 1327 or 1328, according to Zettl's dating, the case was different. By then English translations of *Gui de Warewic* had been made; the Auchinleck MS. itself includes an obviously edited series of tales about his youth (in couplets), his manhood (in stanzas), and a separate romance about his son Reinbroun.³⁰ In the stanzaic account of Guy, over three hundred lines are devoted to his combat with Colbrand. This popular episode could not, in the same volume, in the *Short*

²⁹ For Gerard's Latin translation and its incorporation into Higden's *Polychronicon*, see L. A. Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in England* (New York, 1924; reprinted 1960), pp. 130 ff., and for the vogue of the romance, pp. 128 ff.

³⁰ See my article, "The Auchinleck MS. and a Possible English Bookshop of 1330-40."

Chronicle's account of Athelstan's reign, be ignored, but it could well be reduced, by a frugal editor mindful of the cost of vellum, to the brief, eight-line summary which was there added immediately after the Athelstan Gift Story. This brief addition to the original version of the *Short Chronicle* must be counted then, not only as one of those numerous additions to which we have already alluded (n. 15), additions which give an independence and special flavor to the Auchinleck version, but also as another instance of that planned economy of the volume as a whole and of the inter-relations of its texts. For these matters we have constantly increasing evidence.³¹

Among these textual inter-relations, the connection between the Auchinleck *Chronicle's* Gift Story and the unique Auchinleck romance of *Roland and Vernagu* is notable. The latter began with a short account borrowed from a French version of the *Descriptio*; it told how Charlemagne went to the aid of the emperor of Constantinople; of how the emperor proffered him great treasures; of how Charlemagne chose various holy relics. Though the relationship between the chronicle and the romance has been pointed out before,³² the importance of the two passages in the same volume must justify their quotation anew.

ROLAND AND VERNAGU ³³

SHORT CHRONICLE ³⁴

<p>& a parti of þe holy crosse, 113 Þat in a cristal was don in clos, godes cloþeing. Our leuedi smok þat hye had on Þe ʒerd of araon, Forþ þai gun bring, a spere long & smert Þat longys put to godes hert, 120 He gaf charls þe king; a nail long & gret Þat was y-driue þurch godes fet, Wiþ outen ani lesing.</p>	<p>ʒete he present him also 1630 Oþer riches mani mo Þemperour swerd costentin. Þe schawberk was of gold fin Þer in was closed a nail gret Þat was y driuen þurch godes fet 1635 ʒete he present him þe spere Þat charlmain was won to bere Ozaines sarrazines in bataile Mani swore & seyð saunfaile Þat wiþ þat spere smert 1640 Ihesu was stongen to þe hert.</p>
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³¹ Ibid.; see also the important study by H. M. Smyser, "Charlemagne and Roland and the Auchinleck Ms." *Speculum*, XXI, (1946), 284-288.

³² *MLN*, LX (1945), 94-97.

³³ S. J. H. Herrtage ed., *EETSES*, XXXIX, 136 ff.

³⁴ Carroll and Tuve, *PMLA*, XLVI, 136 ff.

zete he present him y wis
 þe baner of seyn moris
 þat he was won to bere
 Ozain þe sarrazines here 1645
& a parti of þe holi crois
In a cristal don in clos
 & þre of þe þornes kene
 þat wer in godes heued y wene.

The words italicized above in the two passages are identical: three couplet rhymes are the same: *crosse/clos, smert/hert, gret/fet*. Three whole lines (*RV*, vss. 113, 114, 123; *Sh.C.* 1646, 1647, 1635) are almost identical. One text, plainly enough, borrowed from the other. That the borrowing was done for *Roland and Vernagu* is proved by the fact that it contains two details which never appeared in conjunction in any known version of the *Descriptio*, but always appeared in versions of the Gift Story. The romance borrowed from the *Short Chronicle* both the *sperre smert* and the crystal setting for the fragment of the Cross. Ronald Walpole, whose knowledge of the *Turpin-Descriptio* MSS. is authoritative,³⁵ has found none in which the spear-relic or the crystal setting appears. He has identified the very MS. (Add. 40142) from which the *Roland and Vernagu* was translated.³⁶ That the *Roland and Vernagu* borrowed from the Auchinleck version of the *Short Chronicle* is proved by the fact that only this version has v. 1635 in a form identical with that used in the romance.

The addition in this one Carolingian romance of the Passion Lance to the other relics acquired by Charlemagne in the East, is matched by its addition, in certain versions likewise made in England, in still other Carolingian legends. On the Continent neither the *Destruction de Rome*, which told how the Saracens had looted the Passion relics from Rome, nor the *Fierabras*,

³⁵ "Charlemagne and Roland, A Study of the Sources of Two Middle English Metrical Romances, *Roland and Vernagu* and *Otuel and Roland*," *Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Modern Phil.*, XXI (1944), 396-409, traced the history of the *Turpin-Descriptio* through the Latin, the French and English versions. In discussing, pp. 416-417, the occasional addition of the Lance to the other Passion relics acquired by Charlemagne in the *Descriptio* and *Fierabras* legends, Walpole did not differentiate the Continental from the insular versions. For a valuable critical edition of a French translation of the *Descriptio* by Pierre de Beauvais (c. 1212), see Walpole, *Semitic and Oriental Studies*, *Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Semitic Philol.*, XI (1951), 433 ff.

³⁶ "The Source MS. of *Charlemagne and Roland* and the Auchinleck Bookshop," *MLN*, LX (1945), 22-26. Cf. also Smyser, *Speculum*, XXI, 286.

which told how Charlemagne recovered them in Spain, ever included the Lance among those relics. The Continental form for these stories is preserved in a MS. written and illustrated in England (Hanover, Provinzialbibliothek, IV, 578). Its *Destruction*, according to Louis Brandin,³⁷ we may date about 1280, its *Fierabras*, according both to him and to Miss Ida Wirtz,³⁸ in the early fourteenth century. These poems never name the Lance among the Passion relics. But the Hanover *Destruction*, as R. Mehnert surmised,³⁹ shows how easily its phrasing might have led another redactor to suppose the Lance was one of the relics:

Ainc dirrai del corone au vrai justisier, 49
 Qui en Jerusalem se lessa travailier
 Et ferir de la lance et navrer et plaier,
 Et des seintismes clous, dont hom li fist percier.

Here was an allusion to the Lance which might easily be mistaken for the relic itself; in the French *Descriptio*, as Walpole (*Charlemagne and Roland*, p. 417) has pointed out, a mere simile telling how the Holy Thorns "comencerent a florir alsì cum la verge a aron fist" was turned in *Roland and Vernagu*, v. 117, into "þe zerd of Araon," received as a relic by Charlemagne. In another MS., also containing a *Destruction de Rome* and a *Fierenbras*, also written in England but at a somewhat later date than the Hanover MS., probably about 1350, the Lance is named as a relic. In this MS., Egerton 3028,⁴⁰ the first poem has two, the second, one reference to it, but all three references are singularly inconclusive. The Prologue of the *Destruction* announces it will tell of the looting of the relics from Rome:

Les relikes en robbierent Jhesu de majesté, 16
 Les clowes et la corone et l'ensigne honoré
 Et la launce dunt Dieux out le queor percié.

Later on there is a scene which tells of the robbery; Fierabras gathers up "l'ensigne et la lance" (v. 846), and the other relics,

³⁷ "Le MS de Hanovre," *Romania*, XXVIII (1899), 490.

³⁸ *Studien zur Hds. IV, 578 der Provinzialbibliothek zu Hannover, Fierabras d'Alexandre* (Göttingen, 1935), p. 3.

³⁹ "Alte und neue Fierabras Fragen," *Zts. f. rom. Phil.*, LX (1940), 52.

⁴⁰ "La *Destruction de Rome* et *Fierabras*, B.M., Egerton, 3028," ed. L. Brandin, *Romania*, LXIV (1938), 18-100. Cf. also H. M. Smyser, "A New MS. of the *Destruction de Rome* and *Fierabras*," *Harvard Stud. in Phil. and Lit.*, XIV (1932), 339-349.

but of them all, in this very abbreviated version, nothing more is said. Their later history was to be told in the following poem, the *Fierenbras*.

The Egerton *Fierenbras* has only one reference to the Lance relic and that occurs in a Prologue which not only echoes the phrase, "au verrai justisier," of the Hanover *Destruction*, v. 49, quoted above, but conjoins, as does the Egerton *Destruction*, "l'ensigne . . . et la lance," vss. 17, 846. The Prologue to the Egerton *Fierenbras* reads:

Ceo est del roi Charls, ke Fraunce ad a bailer, 3
Cum il recunquist les relikes au verrai justiser,
Les clowes et la corone, qe tant font a preiser
Et la lance et l'ensigne, dunt sun corps fist pener.

It is obvious that the writer of this Prologue was imitating the antecedent Prologue in the Egerton *Destruction*. What is far more revealing is the fact that though this version of *Fierenbras*, like all others, was devoted to Charlemagne's vengeance on the Saracens and his recovery of the Passion relics, not another word is said, in the actual text of the poem, of the Lance. This would have been an inconceivable omission had the Lance ever belonged in the original poem, in which, as Bédier long ago pointed out,⁴¹ the recovery of the Passion relics was a chief unifying element. The Egerton *Fierenbras* follows that original in those two climactic scenes in one of which the converted Saracen Princess Floripas shows to Charlemagne the recovered relics, vss. 1677-82, and in the other he distributes them to various shrines in France, vss. 1761-68. The Passion relics were here named as the Crown of Thorns, the Nails, and "l'ensigne honoré"⁴² just as they had been named in the Continental *Fierabras* vs. 8-9,

⁴¹ "La Composition de *Fierabras*," *Romania*, XVII (1888), 37: "Dans *Fierabras*, le vrai protagoniste, ce sont les reliques," i.e., the Nails, the Thorns, "le signe."

⁴² Editors of English versions of the *Fierabras* legend (see below, notes 47-49) have proposed various interpretations for *l'ensigne*. Herrtage, *Sir Ferumbras*, p. 191, identified it with the "title placed over Our Lord's head"; Hausknecht, *Sowdone of Babylon*, p. 108, n. for v. 665, believed it meant, not the inscription, but rather Christ's shroud (*sudatorium*, *suaire*). Miss O'Sullivan, *Firumbras*, p. xxxix, n. 2, not committing herself about *l'ensigne*, established the meaning of *suaire*, *sudary*, as the napkin placed about Christ's head. In all versions, Latin and French, of the *Descriptio*, it should be noted, the fragment of the Cross and the *sudarium*, *suaire*, were mentioned as separate relics. In the *Sowdon of Babylon*, the "Crosse" unquestionably translates *l'ensigne*.

5941-81 (edited by Kroeber and Servois, Paris, 1860).⁴³ The introduction of the Lance in the Egerton *Destruction* and the Prologue of its *Fierenbras* was an addition by an Anglo-French writer who, having introduced the Lance on his own initiative, did not then know what to do with it. His idea of adding the Lance may have been inspired either by a misreading such as Mehnert suggested, or, more probably, by some local or contemporary suggestion derived from the Athelstan tradition.

There is evidence that such a suggestion was already present in certain English versions of the *Fierabras* legends. In these the Lance had become an integral part of the story. Though considerably later than the Egerton MS., the *Bruce*,⁴⁴ composed in 1375 by Archdeacon John Barbour, incorporates this English tradition: King Robert the Bruce is represented, in a delightful passage, as reading aloud to his followers from the "romanyis off worthi Ferunbrace." Brief as is the summary of the story given by Barbour, it mentions, as the Egerton MS. versions did not, how the Lance was won:

[Charlemagne] wan the naylis and the sper 459
And the croune, that Jhesu ber.

In another poem of northern England, the alliterative *Morte Arthure* (? c. 1360), there is another instance of the same idea. On the turning wheel of Fortune King Arthur dreams that he sees "Karolus, the kyng son of France." Of him it is said:

He shall encroche the crowne, that Crist bare hym selfen: 3426
And þat lufly launce, that lepe to his herte,
When he was crucifiede one cross, and all þe kene naylis
Knyghtly he sall conquere to Cristyn men hondes.⁴⁵

⁴³ Bédier, *Romania*, XVII, 40: "*Fierabras* n'est rien autre chose que la Chanson des reliques de saint-Denis." Cf. also Bédier's *Légendes Épiques* (Paris, 1929), IV, 158-164. For Abbot Suger's comments on the Abbey's possession of the Passion relics, the Nail, the Crown of Thorns, also the arm of St. Simeon, see Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis* (Princeton, 1946), pp. 86, 101, 133.

⁴⁴ W. W. Skeat ed., EETS, XXIX (London, 1870), Bk. III, vss. 437-459.

⁴⁵ Erik Björkman ed. (Heidelberg, 1915). Björkman, p. 171, n. on vss. 3426 f., merely noted the absence of the Lance from accounts of Charlemagne's Eastern journey. On the *MA* see Wells, *Manual*, pp. 36 ff., 767; also the recent translation in *Medieval English Verse and Prose*, by Roger S. Loomis and Rudolph Willard (New York, 1948), esp. pp. 135, 551.

Since one of the liveliest episodes of this poem, the combat of Gawain with the Saracen Priamus, was adapted from the ancient story of the combat of Oliver with the Saracen Fierabras,⁴⁶ the English poet was unquestionably familiar with some version of the famous *chanson de geste*. But in no Continental version of *Fierabras* could he have found any mention of the Lance as among the relics won by Charlemagne.

In such English versions of the *Destruction de Rome* or of the *Fierabras* as were known to us before 1935, i.e., the *Sowdone of Babylone*,⁴⁷ or the *Sir Ferumbras*,⁴⁸ there was likewise no mention of the Lance relic. The publication in that year of the long lost Fillingham MS., now Brit. Mus. Add. 37492, brought to light an English *Firumbras* (F)⁴⁹ in which the Lance was thoroughly integrated into the poem. In this fifteenth-century MS. there are three important references to it. The last of them comes in the concluding lines of the poem and shows that the Lance was thought of first of all among the relics of the *Gest*:

God for the Rode loue zeue hem hys benysoun, 1835
that hauen herd thys gest with gode deuocyon
of the spere & the naylys and of the crowne!

The second reference in F is of particular interest. It comes in that climactic scene in which Charlemagne receives the relics. They are proved authentic by a miracle which was originally taken, as was recognized long ago,⁵⁰ into the Old French *Fierabras* straight from the Latin *Descriptio*. In those two texts the miracle concerned only the Crown of Thorns; when the Thorns were put into Charlemagne's glove, the glove hung unsupported in

⁴⁶ R. H. Griffith, "Malory, *Morte Arthure*, and *Fierabras*," *Anglia*, XXXII (1909), 389-398.

⁴⁷ E. Hausknecht ed., EETSES, XXXVIII (London, 1881); cf. Wells, *Manual*, pp. 84, 775. Brandin, *Romania*, LXIV, 28, thought the *Sowdone*, in some parts, an almost literal translation of the Egerton *Destruction de Rome*. He merely noted, p. 24, in the *Destruction*, the exceptional reference to the Lance.

⁴⁸ *Sir Ferumbras*, *Ashmole MS. 33, c. 1380*, ed. S. J. Herrtage, EETSES, XXXIV (London, 1879). Cf. Wells, *Manual*, pp. 86, 776.

⁴⁹ *Firumbras* and *Otuel and Roland*, ed. Mary O'Sullivan, EETS, CXCVIII (London, 1935). After a survey, pp. xxvii-xl, of all the versions of *Fierabras*, except the Egerton MS. which she did not yet know, Miss O'Sullivan, p. xl, remarked on the unique addition of the Lance to the other relics in the Fillingham *Firumbras*.

⁵⁰ Bédier, *Romania*, XVII, 39; *Légendes Épiques*, IV, 164. He dated the *Descriptio* between 1109-24 (*Leg Ep.*, IV, 125 ff.) and the *Fierabras* (IV, 157) about 1170.

the air. In this English *Firumbras* the miracle was uniquely amplified. In what is a most curious anticipation of Wagner's *Parsifal* (Act II, Scene iii), the Spear also is said to hang in the air:

And they token the naylys of goddys passioun 1799
And the spere also, and maden her orysoun; . . .
he [the bishop] let hys hondys therfro, & let hem haue hor wylle, 1803
bothe the naylys & the spere hongen full styлле.

The first of the three references to the Lance in the former Fillingham MS. gives us, perhaps, a clue to the time and place and circumstances under which its original was made. The Princess Floripas is represented as showing the Passion Relics to the *douze pers* who are besieged with her in the tower at Egremore:

here ys the croune of goddys passyoun. 594
Lo, here ys the *spere* and the nayles also
That longes pyt in hys *hert*, the blod ran there-fro.

This was, of course, a traditional scene in the Continental versions of *Fierabras*; in the version edited by Kroeber and Servois (Paris, 1860), vss. 5230 ff., Floripas shows "la couronne et les III claus . . . et le signe Jhesu," but never the Lance. The English text reminds us at once of the lines in the Auchinleck *Roland and Vernagu*:

a *spere* long smert 119
pat longys put to goddes *hert*.

The verbal similarity between the two English poems becomes doubly important when we note that in the many references in Middle English⁵¹ to Longinus and the Spear with which he pierces, smites, stings, thrusts, or bears, lays, sets it to, the side of Christ, this simple but particular combination of words about the Spear that "longys put to goddes hert," seems to occur, before 1400, only in these two texts. Did the author of the original English *Firumbras* take them from *Roland and Vernagu*? We know, again thanks to Walpole,⁵² that the *Roland and Otuel*, which is a companion piece in the former Fillingham MS. to the

⁵¹ Rose Peebles, *The Legend of Longinus in Ecclesiastical Tradition and in English Literature* (Baltimore, 1911), Ch. vi.

⁵² *Charlemagne and Roland*, pp. 429 ff.

Firumbras, was originally a planned sequel to the Auchinleck *Roland and Vernagu*. If the one poem came originally from the Auchinleck bookshop, may not the other also? Was this original English *Firumbras* one of the thirteen items known to have been lost from the Auchinleck MS? Was this lost version, the prototype of *Firumbras* (F), the first to feature the Lance among the relics won by Charlemagne in Spain, the first to make the Lance scenes memorable? Some version had done this, as we know from the allusions in the alliterative *Morte Arthure* and Barbour's *Bruce*, and we cannot believe that the inconsequential references in the Egerton MS. had ever inspired those allusions. An Auchinleck *Firumbras*, the source of F, would account for both the vigorous emphasis on the Lance which was remembered by two later poets, and for the borrowing of the "Longes" line from *Roland and Vernagu*. Since this last text had borrowed, in the same stanza, three lines from the Auchinleck *Short Chronicle*, dated by Zetzl between 1327 and 1328, the romance must be dated between those years and 1340 when the Auchinleck MS. is thought to have been completed. An Auchinleck *Firumbras* would have belonged to the same period. It was then, presumably, for the first time in an English *Firumbras*, that the Lance was added to the Passion relics acquired by Charlemagne.

Our study of William of Malmesbury's version of the Athelstan Gift Story has led us through numerous later versions in Anglo-Norman, Latin, English. They illustrate, sometimes amusingly, how "historical" tradition was sometimes created; tested by each other, they throw new light on their own development; they show concretely the passing of a supposedly historical into a romantic tradition. We catch a new glimpse of what must have gone on about 1330 in the little London bookshop where we have reason to believe that the Auchinleck MS., that first notable anthology of Middle English verse, was published. Finally, we must observe that the evidence of the long continuity in England of the tradition of Charlemagne's possession of the Passion Lance, coupled with the almost total lack of any such tradition in Continental Carolingian narratives before 1400,⁵³ emphasizes the probability that it was only in England, before or after 1125, that the author of the *Chanson de Roland* could have found a source, a reason, for introducing into his poem the famous

⁵³ See *Speculum*, XXV, 450-451.

allusion that in modern times, was destined to give rise to so much controversy.⁵⁴

Carles en ad la mure, mercit Deu.

2505

⁵⁴ It is unfortunate that in his impressive study, *La Chanson de Roland dans les littératures française et espagnole au moyen âge* (Paris, 1951), p. 291 f., Jules Horrent not only accepts a post-1098 date for the Lance passage in the *Roland* but thinks it has "l'apparence de digression." Since it alone explains the war cry Monjoie which rings throughout the *Roland* and also the name Joyeuse, one may well ask what else is more integral to the whole poem?

SECULAR DRAMATICS IN THE
ROYAL PALACE, PARIS, 1378, 1389,
AND CHAUCER'S "TREGETOURES" *

For I am siker that ther be sciences
By whiche men make diverse apparences,
Swiche as these subtile tregetoures pleye.
For ofte at feestes have I wel herd seye
That tregetours, withinne an halle large,
Have made come in a water and a barge,
And in the halle rowen up and doun.
Somtyme hath semed com a grym leoun;
And somtyme floures sprynge as in a mede;
Somtyme a vyne, and grapes white and rede;
Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon;
And whan hem lyked, voyded it anon.
Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.

THESE lines from Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*¹ report what a sometime clerk of Orleans has heard concerning scenic marvels which "subtile tregetoures" had made appear in a large hall. Later on, in ll. 1185-1214, we are told that this same clerk and his sick brother, Aurelius, both now in Orleans and both sitting comfortably for an hour or so in the book-lined study of another Orleans clerk, are shown by him hunters killing deer, falconers

* From *Speculum*, XXXIII (1958), 242-255.

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¹ F. N. Robinson, ed., *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 2nd ed. (Boston, Mass., 1957). Permission from the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Co., to quote from this latest edition is gratefully acknowledged. For close parallels, among those cited by Robinson, p. 724, l. 1141, to the passage quoted and to ll. 1190-98, see Mandeville's account of wonders seen at the Great Khan's court (ed. Hamelius, E.E.T.S., O.S., 153 [1919], I, 143, 156). On Chaucer's use of Mandeville, see also Josephine W. Bennett, *The Rediscovery of Sir John Mandeville* (New York, 1954), pp. 224-226; *MLN*, LXVIII (1953), 531-534.



remerciement fist laurencis
 de reims. **C**ertes seoir
 l'emperour. **A**pres seoir
 le roy andreweine en milieu
 du foyur de la sale. **A**pres
 le Roy de france seoir le roy

des romains. Et auoir autant de distance
 du Roy au Roy des romains come du
 Roy a l'emperour. Et auoient l'emperour
 le Roy et le Roy des romains chascun se-
 parremet en tel de drap dor toute de celui
 au aus armes de france. et par dessus ceul

The First Crusade as Enacted 6 January 1378
 in the Royal Palace, Paris
 Bibl. Nat., Fr. 2813, f. 473v.

with their hawks, knights jousting, dances in which Aurelius himself appears with his lady. These moving pictures are frankly attributed to the "magyk" of this master clerk, who, when he wished to end his entertainment, simply clapped his hands and it disappeared. Though to us today it may seem even more "magical" that Chaucer's imagination should thus cosily, by over five centuries, have anticipated motion pictures in the home, even as, in the *House of Fame*, ll. 1071-83, where words turn into images, he seems to anticipate television, there can be no doubt that, like his own contemporaries, the poet did accept magic as a part of his world. Despite one strong expression of scepticism in the *Franklin's Tale*, l. 1131, "swiche folye is nat worthe a flye," and perhaps a hint of it in the "Thus *semed* it" of l. 1151, magic does play an important part in the plot, and its various "apparances" have usually been accepted as "magical visions."² Chaucer's "tregetours" have always been glossed as jugglers or magicians.³ But jugglers obviously could never have produced at a feast in a hall such weighty effects as a movable boat and a castle, both made to appear and disappear. Nor, as we shall see from the records which follow, did magicians have anything to do with them either. Similar effects had in actual fact been seen by hundreds of people in the royal palace in Paris in 1378 and 1389. Of the first production there we have, incredible as it may seem, both an official eye-witness account and an official, contemporary picture.

Our photographic reproduction of that picture comes, by permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, from the almost full-page illumination in one of its treasured manuscripts, Fr.

² J. S. P. Tatlock, "Astrology and Magic in the *Franklin's Tale*," *Kittredge Anniversary Papers* (Boston, 1913), p. 341.

³ W. W. Skeat, ed., *Complete Works of Chaucer*, III (1894), 271, 273, notes to *House of Fame*, Bk. III, ll. 1260, 1277, listed earlier forms of *tregetour*: OF. *tregiteor*; Ital. *traggettatore*; Prov. *trasjitar*, all having to do with the idea of juggling. The Prov. form "would answer to a Low Latin *trans-iectare* . . . to throw across . . . cause to pass. Thus, the original sense of *trejetour* was one who causes rapid changes, by help of some mechanical contrivance." Skeat here followed Thomas Tyrwhitt, *The Canterbury Tales* (London, 1830; reprinted from 1775-78 edition), IV, 268, who, in a long note on *tregetour*, defined the word as meaning ". . . a juggler who by sleight of hand and machines, produced such illusions . . . as are supposed to be effected by enchantment. . . . That a great deal of machinery was requisite to produce the *apparances*, or illusions, enumerated in the *Franklin's Tale*, is certain." Neither editor produced any evidence for the machines or for their actual use. See below, n. 7. For *Colle Tregetour*, see Robinson's note, *House of Fame*, p. 785, l. 1277.

2813, f. 473v. That splendid volume, made between 1375 and 1379, contains the *Chronique de Charles V*, for which this and many other contemporary illustrations were made. It has been monumentally edited and studied by R. Delachenal.⁴ Our picture illustrates that great occasion on Wednesday, 6 January 1378, when the French king sumptuously entertained at dinner his learned, imperial uncle, the Emperor Charles IV.⁵ The *Chronique* is especially precise and detailed in telling of what happened at that feast in the royal palace, the Palais de la Cité.⁶ In commenting on the feast and the dramatic entertainment offered, the *Chronique* (II, 236) even speaks of their representation in this very picture, “ci après pourtraite et ymaginée.” Text and picture alike amply confirm the report of Chaucer’s Orleans clerk that at a feast in a great hall there had in truth appeared “a water and a barge,” also a castle too! The chronicler speaks admiringly not only of the handsome, realistic fashioning of these necessarily large objects, but of how skilfully they were moved about, “tres legierement” (II, 240), by men concealed within. At the end, “les diz entremets furent remenez en leurs places premieres,” (II, 242), or, in Chaucer’s words, were “voyded.” The “tregetoures” who enacted rôles in this royal *entremés, mystère mimé sans parolles*, interlude, pantomime, whatever one chooses

⁴ *Les Grandes Chroniques de France, Chronique des Regnes de Jean II et Charles V*, ed. R. Delachenal (Paris, 1910-20), II, 232-244; *Histoire de Charles V* (Paris, 1909-31), V, 95-99. These two works will be referred to respectively as *Chronique* and *Histoire*. The *Histoire*, V, ch. 2, gives a historical-literary estimate of the *Chronique*’s account of the Emperor’s visit to Paris, which Delachenal (V, 78) felt surpassed even Froissart in reportorial completeness. The account was supervised, if not written, by the chancellor, Pierre d’Orgemont (*Chronique*, IV, 1; *Histoire*, I, xviii; Index, V, 503).

⁵ On the learning and piety of the Emperor Charles IV see S. H. Thomson, *Speculum*, XXV (1950), 1-20: *Cambridge Mediaeval History* (Cambridge, England, 1932), VII, ch. vi (by W. Krofta).

⁶ Some writers on the Louvre wrongly state that the great feast was given there. Cf. L. Hauteceur, *Histoire du Louvre, 1200-1928* (Paris, 1928), p. 11; A. Blum, *Le Louvre, du palais au musée* (Paris, 1946), p. 28. The official *Chronique* (II, 222) tells of the emperor’s arrival at the Palais, and of his departure from it (II, 244), on the morning after the great feast, to go on a visit to the Louvre. Delachenal (*Histoire*, II, 269) discusses the king’s use of the Palais de la Cité for great occasions. Cf. *Histoire*, V, Index, “Louvre” and “Palais.” Accounts of the Palais dating from 1323, 1400, and 1440, may be found in Le Roux de Lincy, *Paris et ses historiens aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles* (Paris, 1867), Index, “Palais”; B. Sauvart et J. Schmidt, *Histoire du Palais de Justice, de la Conciergerie et de la Sainte Chapelle* (Paris, 1825), pp. 19-24. The Palais was given over to the exclusive use of Parlement in 1431. Largely destroyed by fires in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was rebuilt as the Palais de Justice. Cf. H. Haynie, *Paris, Past and Present* (New York, 1902), pp. 47-52.

to call it, who made or who moved its large stage properties about, were certainly not magicians, not jugglers. They were the unknown men, actors, craftsmen, *artisans mécaniques*, who, in effective unison, produced spectacular results.⁷ That such an exceptional palace performance—in no wise an idle *mommerie* . . . *pour resjoir les dames*—would be long talked of, that the fame of it would go abroad, is certain. In informal talk, after 6 January 1378, courtly French negotiators might have spoken of it to the English negotiators sent to arrange a marriage between Richard II and the little French princess who died so unexpectedly on 23 February. Chaucer, though unnamed, may have been among them, as he certainly had been in 1377, but records show that his lively, Gascon-born friend, Sir Guichard d'Angle, was commissioned on 16 January and went abroad with the other English negotiators.⁸ Or again, at any time after December 1381, when Anne of Bohemia, the emperor's daughter, came to England to become its queen, some courtly Bohemian in her service, might, from his own memory of the emperor's visit to Paris, have recalled for the English poet, that night of splendor and of spectacle. But rumor's ways of conveying information are as innumerable as they are unpredictable.

Before taking up the account itself in MS. fr. 2813, something of its curious history must be noted. Though the *Chronique* was printed from other manuscripts by Paulin Paris in 1838,⁹ his two brief footnotes calling attention to the illumination and to the dramatic entertainment both pictured and described in the royal manuscript, went almost unnoticed. As an art treasure,

⁷ For many instances of the skill of mediaeval mechanics in producing animated automata and other magic-seeming contrivances see Merriam Sherwood, "Magic and Mechanics in Medieval Fiction," *Studies in Philology*, XLIV (1947), 567-592, and Gerard Brett, "The Automata in the Byzantine 'Throne of Solomon,'" *Speculum*, XXIX (1954), 477-487. The castle of Hesdin in Artois was, in the fourteenth century, full of "engiens d'esbattement" (Sherwood, p. 587). See below, n. 23.

⁸ For documents touching on the controversial issue as to whether Chaucer was in France in the early months of 1378, see Haldeen Braddy, *Review of English Studies*, XIV (1938), 3-5; *Three Chaucer Studies*, Part II, "Parlement of Fowles and its Relation to Contemporary Events" (New York, 1932), pp. 18-26. Cf. *Life Records of Chaucer*, Chaucer Society, 1900, pp. 203-204. Cf. Robinson, p. xxii; M. Chute, *Geoffrey Chaucer of England* (New York, 1946), pp. 118-124.

⁹ *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, ed. Paulin Paris (Paris, 1838), VI, 384, n. 1; p. 386, n. 1: "Voila bien le premier sens de ce mot (*entremés*), divertissement donné pendant l'intervalle des services. Nous allons voir une mise-en-scène du XIV^e siècle, telle qu'on la chercherait ailleurs, car le seul MS de Charles V contient ce qui suit." For a more accurate account of the MSS, see Delachenal, *Chronique*, II, 238, n. 3.

MS. fr. 2813 has long received from art critics due recognition as a good example of typically Parisian, late fourteenth-century style; special comment on f. 473v has not been lacking.¹⁰ Historians have, of course, long valued the *Chronique de Charles V* as a historical document. In 1952 the *Shorter Cambridge Medieval History* (II, Fig. 181) even reproduced f. 473v, for its documentary value in picturing the meeting of two great rulers. Delachenal, after editing the text made in his *Histoire* (V, 92-98) a careful study of the events of 6 January 1378, but naturally had no interest in the dramatic performance as such. Surprisingly, historians of mediaeval French drama¹¹ have done little more than mention occasionally the fact that a dramatic spectacle was given on this occasion. Misled, perhaps, by the omission or great abbreviation of the account in some manuscripts of the *Chronique*, or by the very short notice of the evening's entertainment in Christine de Pisan's book about Charles V,¹² they have failed to realize that the royal manuscript gives a meticulously detailed, eye-witness account. Though sometimes noting the subject matter, they have not, to the present writer's knowledge, commented on its exceptional nature in 1378. For these reasons the text of this official account with its details about stage craft in the palace and this official illustration are presented together here. They are of vital interest for their own sake and also for their possible relation to a later theatrical enterprise in the same place. But it was, apparently, in 1378 that in France a first memorable effort was made, and this under royal auspices, to stage a notable *event* in human history.

¹⁰ A. Michel, *Histoire de l'Art* (Paris, 1907), III, 131 f.; C. Couderc, *Album de portraits d'après les collections du département des manuscrits* (Paris, 1910), p. xi; Delachenal, *Chronique*, IV (*Miniatures du MS de Charles V*), 1-12, 35-36, pl. XLI: "Le grand entremets." Bibliothèque Nationale, *Manuscrits à peintures du XIII^e au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1955), p. 60, No. 123. See also n. 31, below (Martin).

¹¹ Émile Roy, *Études sur le théâtre français du XIV^e et du XV^e siècle: La Comédie sans titre* (Paris, 1902), pp. cxxxii-vi, spoke briefly of the royal dramatic spectacles of 1378 and 1389; so, likewise, for the 1378 spectacle, did Gustave Cohen, *Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre religieux français du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1951), p. 64 (reprinted from 1906, 1921). He called attention (n. 2) to the probable influence of the *mystères mimés* on the *mystères parlés*, a subject still awaiting full investigation.

¹² Christine de Pisan, *Le Livre des fais et bonnes moeurs du sage roy, Charles V*, ed. S. Solente (Paris, 1936-40), II, 112-114. According to this edition (II, xxxix) Christine wrote in 1404 and used for her source for the emperor's visit Vat. lat. 4791. She thought the entertainment of 6 January "pertinent pur exemples donner à telx princes," but gave a brief confused account of two "entremez . . . la cité grande et belle . . . et puis la nef où Goudeffroy de Billon estoit."

After a careful account of how in the morning the king and the emperor had devoutly visited the Sainte Chapelle, the *Chronique* (II, 235-56) tells how they and their retinue proceeded "par la Grant Sale du Palais, jusques au hault de la table de marbre," how they sat at that table, King Charles with the emperor at his right, the archbishop of Rheims at the emperor's right, at the king's left, the son of the emperor, Wenceslas of Luxembourg, King of the Romans (since his election in 1376), and at his left three bishops, of Brusseberc (Braunsberg), of Paris, and of Beauvais; the illumination shows but two. Behind the three royal figures were resplendent hangings. On five raised platforms were five large tables for the noblest guests, and these were protected by barriers from the throng of more than eight hundred knights who likewise, in the great hall, shared in the banquet of three elaborate courses, each of ten dishes. Before this great audience the *entremés* was given, as the official chronicler modestly reported, "mieulx et plus proprement . . . que en escript ne se puet mectre."

CHRONIQUE DE CHARLES V
(ed. Delachenal, II, 238-242)

L'ystoire et l'ordenance fu comment Godefroy de Buillon conquist la sainte cité de Jherusalem. Et fist le Roy faire à propos ceste hystoire, que il li sembloit que devant plus grans en la Chrestienté ne pouvoit on ramentevoir, ne donner exemple, de plus notable fait, ne à gens qui mieulx peussent, deussent et fussent tenus tele chose faire et entreprendre, ou service de Dieu. Et, pour mieulx figurer la besoigne et plus plainement la cognoistre, fu fait ce qui s'ensuit. Ou bout de la sale du Palais, qui estoit entreclos tellement que on n'en pouvoit riens veoir par dehors, avoit une nef bien façonnée, à forme d'une nave de mer garnie de voile et de mast, chastel devant et derriere, et de tous autres abillemens et ordenances, qui appartiennent à nef pour aler sur mer, et estoit si joliquement peinte et abilliée, et tres richement et plaisamment. Et dedenz estoit garnie de genz par semblance armez bien joliquement, et estoient leurs cotes d'armes, leurs escuz et banieres des armes de Jherusalem, que Godefroy de Buillon portoit; et jusques à douze estoient, come dit est, armez des armes des notables chevetaines, qui furent à la dite conquete de Jherusalem, avecques le dit Godefroy. Et estoit au devant, sur le bout de la dite nef, Pierre l'Ermite, en l'ordenance et maniere et au plus près qu'il se pouvoit faire, selon ce que l'ystoire raconte. Et fu la dite nef mise hors

à gens qui couvertelement estoient dedenz, et fu menée tres legierement par le costé senestre du dit Palais, et si legierement tournée, que il sembloit que ce fust une nef flotant sur l'eau, et ainsi fu amenée jusques au grant dayz, ou dit costé de l'autre part, qui fu le destre costé de la dite sale. Et après ce, fu mis, hors de la place d'encosté où la dite nef estoit partie, un entremés fait à la façon et semblance de là cité de Jherusalem, et y estoit le temple bien contrefait selon l'espace, et là avoit une tour haulte, assise delez le temple, ainsi comme les Sarrazins ont de coustume, où ilz crient leur loy. Là avoit un vestu en habit de Sarrazin tres proprement, et qui, en langue arrabique, crioit la loy, en la maniere que font les Sarrazins. Et estoit la dite tour si haulte que celui qui estoit dessus joignoit bien près des trefs de la dite sale. Et le bas, tout entour de la dite cité, où il avoit forme de creneaux et de murs et de tours, estoit (p. 242) garny de Sarrazins, armez à leur maniere, et banieres et panons, et ordenez à combatre pour deffendre la cité. Ainsi fu amené à force de gens, qui estoient dedenz si couvers que on ne les pouvoit veoir, jusques devant le dit grant dayz, à la destre partie. Et lors se mistrent les deux entremés l'un contre l'autre et descendirent ceuls de la nef, et par belle et bonne ordenance vindrent donner assault à la cité et longuement l'assailirent, et y ot bon esbatement de ceuls qui montoient à l'assault à eschielles, qui en estoient ravalez et abatuz à terre. Et finablement monterent dessus ceuls de la nef et conquistent la dite cité, et getoient hors ceuls qui estoient en habit de Sarrazins, en mectant sus les banieres de Godefroy et des autres. Et mieulx et plus proprement fu fait et veu que en escript ne se puet mectre. Et, quant l'esbatement fu parfait, les diz entremés furent remenez tous entiers en leurs places premieres. Après ce, fu le disner finé. . . .

In this detailed record of the actual performance, as also in its pictorial representation, there are some most unexpected elements. Who would have supposed that in 1378 the instinct for realism would have gone so far as to represent a Saracen in the act of calling *in Arabic* other Saracens to prayer? Who would have thought that the heroic exploit of conquering Jerusalem in 1099 would be shown with enjoyable moments of comic relief, as when knights fell sprawling from their ladders? The illumination shows a careful use of costume and accessories to differentiate the personages of the *entremés*. The Saracens have dark faces and a turban-like twist of cloth around their helmets. The arms of the Crusaders are anachronistic, but Christian heraldry does

significantly differentiate the Crusaders from their foes. From the boat float the banners bearing the arms of Jerusalem (stern), of Auvergne (masthead), of England (center spearhead), of Flanders (prow), and these arms appear again on the Crusaders attacking Jerusalem.¹³ The text speaks of twelve men in the boat besides Peter the Hermit, and the unseen men who, from within, moved it about. In representing only the solitary figure of Peter the Hermit in the boat, as well as in showing only two (instead of three) bishops at the right end of the royal table and only one tower to represent Jerusalem, the artist was practicing a wise artistic economy that left his picture clearer and more forceful. He was, even so, attempting a far more complicated composition than was common at the time, and he was uncommonly realistic in his presentation of the royal hangings, the *table d'honneur*, the boat, tower, and ladders. There is even some attempt at portraiture of the king and the emperor.

The importance of this *entremés* on the First Crusade, its subject matter ostensibly chosen by King Charles himself, has not been recognized. To be sure, the memorable subject was known through chronicles and such poems of the *Cycle de la Croisade*¹⁴ as the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the *Chanson de Jérusalem* and others. In the royal library of the Louvre the catalogue of 1373 (G) listed no fewer than thirteen manuscripts with the name of Godfrey de Bouillon appearing in the title of each one; all of these were in prose. One very large volume (No. 1025; G, 32), described as "tres bien historié," may conceivably have been used to provide pictorial suggestions for the royal *entremés*.

There is good reason to suppose that King Charles, between 1373 and 1378, was led from reluctance to consider a new Crusade to some sympathy with the idea of following the great example of Godfrey de Bouillon. Constantly at the king's side, as his close personal friend and one of his official counsellors, was that notable

¹³ Delachenal, *Chronique*, IV, 36, n. 4, thus identified the four ship banners. His earlier identification (II, 240, n. 4) of the center banner as bearing arms of Normandy, he here changed to those of England. Cf. Fox-Davies, *Art of Heraldry* (London, 1904), p. 121, quoted Glovers' Roll, about 1250, "le Roy d'angleterre porte Geules trois lupards d'or," the heraldic leopard being a certain position of lion. See below, the *Pas Saladin*.

¹⁴ R. Bossuat, *Manuel bibliographique de la littérature française du Moyen Age* (Melun, 1951), pp. 84-88, *Supplément* (1955), p. 34; E. Roy, "Les Poèmes français relatifs à la première croisade," *Romania*, LV (1929), 411-468. For *Godfrey de Bouillon* texts in the royal library, see L. Delisle, *Recherches sur la librairie de Charles V* (Paris, 1907), pp. 207 f. and Index.

French diplomat, traveller, and religious enthusiast, Philippe de Mézières,¹⁵ of whose special interest in drama more will be said. From Mézières's youthful days as an ardent Crusader, from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, from 1359 to 1369 when he served as chancellor to the king of Cyprus, from his return to Paris in 1373 until his death there in 1405, he seems never to have deviated from the supreme purpose of his life, the liberation of the Holy Land.¹⁶ In 1367-68 he wrote the first *Regule militaris Passionis Jhesu Christi*, the new order of chivalry by which he hoped to aid in that ultimate liberation; forty years later he was still at work on its later revision. The Louvre library of Charles V contained Mézières's own *Lamentation de Jérusalem sur la negligence des chrétiens*. But it must have been by talk, rather than by his writings, most of them of later date, that Mézières brought Charles V somewhat to share in his own great aim. The second sentence quoted above from the *Chronique* attributes definite intention to the King.

There was widespread interest in the fourteenth century in the idea of a new crusade. In 1365 a brief success was achieved in the temporary capture of Alexandria, but the movement ended in the Crusaders' dreadful defeat at Nicopolis in 1396. Among all who had worked for the Crusade, Philippe de Mézières has been called "the greatest of all the propagandists."¹⁷ When his king was to entertain the Emperor in 1378 this courtier-diplomat,¹⁸ already experienced in dramatic representation, was just the man to perceive the advantage of giving the good "exemple" of the First Crusade before two great rulers; he was also just the man to

¹⁵ A fundamental study is N. Jorga's *Philippe de Mézières (1327-1405) et la croisade au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1896). For more recent studies of his literary, especially of his dramatic work, see below, notes 16, 19, 36.

¹⁶ Dora M. Bell, *Étude sur Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin de Philippe de Mézières* (Geneva, 1955), pp. 142, 181. In her valuable study of this still unpublished allegory, she thus summarizes (p. 142) the advice it gives to young Charles VI: "au lieu de lire les histoires du roi Arthur . . . il vaudrait mieux s'inspirer de l'exemple de Godfroy de Bouillon et s'aguïser l'esprit en écoutant les conseils d'Ardant Désir qui prêchait la paix entre les princes chrétiens en faveur d'une croisade générale pour la reconquête de la Terre Sainte."

¹⁷ A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London, 1934), pp. 26, 124. The first chapter surveys crusading efforts in the fourteenth century, a subject greatly expanded in his *Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938); cf. Index, for Philippe de Mézières. For the latter's own exhortations to a crusade see Jorga, op. cit., pp. 342, 347, 352, 482, 489, 492.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 428, for presence of Mézières in Paris in 1377-78. In *Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin* he referred to the feast given by Charles V for the emperor in 1378 (Bell, p. 158).

see to it that it had handsome settings and enough "esbatement" to please such a courtly audience. Such an excursion into secular history, divorced from all religious legend, was a bold innovation, but its subject was of supreme concern to the one man at the French court who had already had the extraordinary experience of presenting in Venice (about 1370) a celebration "cum representatione," and then in Avignon, on 21 November 1372, a liturgical play staged with great splendor. For this we have Mézières's own text and stage directions.¹⁹ It would be strange if, a few years later, his practical experience were not used for the successful production of this palace *entremés*, from which inspiration for a new crusade might come, his own most passionate hope. The single performance, given before a king, an emperor and his son, before their great vassals, had an audience of European significance and prestige.

Secular elements had, of course, long since invaded French religious drama,²⁰ comic themes and rôles were developing separately into farces, impersonation of legendary or vaguely historical personages in procession and fêtes had long been known. "Chivalric and Dramatic Imitations of Arthurian Romance"²¹ were familiar in the thirteenth century; by 1330 even the burghers of Tournai had a Round Table society and were inviting other towns to attend jousts imitative of Arthur's. But these semi-dramatic imitations of Arthurian romance were revels making no distinction between actors and audience, and they did not reach the status of drama much before 1400. Where, indeed, in records of French dramatic performances before 1378 can we

¹⁹ The liturgical play concerned the presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the temple. It was discovered by Karl Young (*PMLA*, XXVI (1911), 181-250). See K. Young, *The Drama of the Mediaeval Church* (Oxford, 1933), II, 225-245, for complete text of play and stage directions; Hardin Craig, *English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 78-79; Grace Frank, *Medieval French Drama* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 64-65, 70-73, 157, and Index for Mézières.

²⁰ For a recent, compact and authoritative survey of religious and secular elements in early French drama, see Mrs. Frank's book, especially Chapters x ("Beginnings of the Miracle Play"), xii ("Les Miracles de Notre Dame") xvi ("The Fifteenth Century, Survivals, Staging"), xix ("Serious Non-Religious Plays: The Beginnings of Comedy"), Bibliography, pp. 272-288. See below, notes 32-37.

²¹ R. S. Loomis in *Medieval Studies in Memory of A. Kingsley Porter* (Cambridge, Mass.), pp. 79-97. For a secular play, Arthurian only in the hero's name, and dating from the late fourteenth century, see R. Guiette, "De Lanseloet van Denemerken et des Abele Spelen, in *Mélanges d'histoire du théâtre du Moyen Age . . . offerts à Gustave Cohen* (Paris, 1950), pp. 229-239.

find any use of secular history to compare with the royal *entremés* of that year? For it every device of drama except dialogue was used, but it had at least one speaking part. It was enacted in a restricted area where large stage properties were moved about by men who must have had considerable training to accomplish the smoothness of motion so praised in the *Chronique*. Historic personages were distinguished by costume and gesture, and the mimetic, continuing action in which they appeared had a distinct beginning and end. The performance, given as interludes were, till a much later time than this, between the courses of a banquet,²² was for the entertainment of an audience, whatever its moral and inspirational meaning too. Splendidly staged, for a splendid occasion, it would seem to have been the first time in France that a historical *event*, unrelated to Biblical or saintly legend, was used for dramatic representation, and this under royal auspices. Can it have been forgotten when, eleven years later, for another great occasion, in the same royal palace, another subject was chosen, again from human history, from non-religious story, a subject that likewise required a ship and a towered "cité"?

For this *entremés* of 1389 we have again what seems to be an eyewitness account. In Froissart's particularly vivid description of the entry into Paris in that year of the queen, Isabelle of Bavaria, he remarked with satisfaction that he was present when she passed along the street of St-Denis and saw the staged representation of the *Pas Saladin*, of which more presently. That he was also present the next day, Monday, 21 June, when Charles VI gave a great dinner in the Palais de la Cité, is probable, for Froissart's details, as will be seen from the passage quoted below, were amazingly precise. They tell us how the great marble table was extended, of those who sat there, of the barriers erected to control the host of guests, more than five hundred ladies, and great numbers of servitors, ushers, and minstrels. The account is reminiscent of that given for the great dinner of 1378, an occasion strangely unmentioned by Froissart. For present purposes the outstanding part of his narrative comes when he says he will not record the many notable dishes that were served at the dinner of 1389, but instead will speak of the "entremets, qui y furent, qui furent si bien ordonnés que on ne pouvait mieulx."

²² L. Wright, "Notes on *Fulgens and Lucrece*, New Light on the Interlude," *MLN*, XLI (1926), 97-100. This English interlude (about 1500) reveals the continued traditional method of presentation.

Au milieu du palais avoit ung chastelet ouvré et charpenté en quarrure de quarante piés de hault et de vingt piés de long et de vingt piés de large et, avoit quatre tours sur les quatre quartiers, et une tour plus haulte assés ou milieu du chastel, et estoit figuré le chastel pour la cité de Troye la Grant, et la tour du mylieu pour le palais de Ylion, et là estoient en pennons les armes des Troiens, telles que du roy Priant, du preu Hector son fils et de ses enffans, et aussi des roys et des princes qui furent enclos dedens Troye avoec euls. Et aloit ce chastel sur quatre roes qui tournoient par dedens moult soubtillement, et vindrent ce chastel requerre et assaillir autres gens d'un lés qui estoient en ung pavillon lequel pareillement aloit sur roes couvertement et soubtillement; car on ne veoit riens du mouvement, et là estoient les armoieries des roys de Grèce et d'ailleurs, qui mirent jadis le siège devant Troye. Ancoires y avoit, sicomme en leur ayde, une nef très-proprement faite où bien povoient (estre) cent hommes d'armes, et tout par l'art et engin des roes se mouvoient ces trois choses, le chastel, la nef et le pavillon. Et eut de ceulx de la nef et du pavillon grant assault d'un lés a ceulx du chastel, et de ceulx du chastel aux dessusdis grant deffense. Mais l'esbatement ne peult longuement durer pour la cause de la grant presse de gens. . . .

Froissart goes on to tell how this performance was brought, by royal command, to an abrupt end; a large table collapsed and, from the consequent crowding and the heat, ladies began to faint. Short as is the account, however, it leaves no doubt that the Fall of Troy was to have been set forth, and that for it large stage properties had been constructed—or reconstructed. The very measurements are given for the Troy set, and in view of the statement in 1378 that a man in the high tower of Jerusalem nearly touched the ceiling of the palace hall, it is interesting to know that the central Troy tower was higher than the four lesser towers around it. Both "cities" were strongly built, for both had to endure assault. From the point of view of theatrical mechanics it is important to note Froissart's specific statement that it was "par l'art et engin des roes," by the device of hidden wheels, that in 1389 the stage city, ship, and *pavillon* were moved about. Though Froissart's emphasis on wheels seems to imply something new, it is probable that they had also been used in the 1378 production, where a boat with thirteen men visibly in it, and a

castle with its defenders, had to be moved about.²³ The Troy ship must have been large indeed to justify Froissart's guess that it might hold "cent hommes d'armes"; like the Crusaders' ship it must have been handsomely made and painted. Perhaps, in the recesses of the "Grand Palais" of St. Louis, grandly enlarged in 1313 by Philippe le Bel, there was storage room where such important, costly stage properties could be kept indefinitely. But whether the Troy properties were the same or newly built, the likeness between the two sets is unmistakable. Mediaeval heraldic conventions were observed for ancient Troy as for the Jerusalem of 1099, and for each set the glow of heraldic banners must have added splendor to the scene. Both productions were given in the course of a royal banquet, and Froissart's use of the same terms, *entremets* for a performance between courses, and *esbatement* for entertainment, is to be noted. Despite the fiasco in which, through no fault of its own, the Troy *entremés* ended, the rumor of its splendid "apparences" may well have gone abroad to whet anew men's wonder that a ship and a castle could thus suddenly appear in a great hall. In that case the rumor might have reached Chaucer at a time when he was fully embarked on his *Canterbury Tales* and when, at last, there was a three-year truce (1389-92) between England and France.

Without further discussion of these two indoor performances, we may turn to Froissart's account of the outdoor performance of the *Pas Saladin*. To this almost every commentator on the emerging secular drama of France has referred, so we need only note that it was enacted on a raised stage (*l'eschafault*) with a castle upon it, that the warriors bore heraldic arms, that the Christians assaulted the Saracens with great vigor. Speaking parts were given to King Richard of England, who asked and received permission from the French king to make this assault, an indication of how easily these *mystères mimés* could pass from pantomime to speech.

²³ A movable castle was no new thing: "ung grant chasteau . . . allant par engien moult richement," was recorded in Valenciennes, 1330. Cf. R. Withington, *English Pageantry* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1918), pp. 85-94. Roy, *Théâtre français*, p. cxxxii, noted Froissart's reference to wheels. Roy also noted, from an account of 14 January 1408, the still unpaid expenses of a painter, Colart de Laon, incurred for royal celebrations, including that of 1389. In regard to stage ships in the later fourteenth century, D. Penn, *The Staging of the 'Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages'* (New York, 1933), marked (p. 39) the use of ships in five of these plays, and (p. 19) the mimic sea, a masonry basin built for them in the stage floor. Her account p. 39 of the dramatic performances of 1378 and 1389 is confused.

Its subject matter is of special interest; its historic kernel seems to have been the relief of Jaffa in 1192 by Richard and his knights.²⁴ By 1300 the *Pas Saladin*,²⁵ an extant French poem, gave vogue to a new, supposedly historical story of how Richard and twelve companions had held an imaginary pass against Saladin, of how a Saracen spy, recognizing the Christian heroes, reported their famous names and Saladin retreated. The poem was designed to please descendants of those Christian heroes, and representations of them and their arms henceforth were frequently depicted in castle wall paintings, in carvings on wooden chests or ivory caskets, in tapestries such as the Black Prince gave his son in 1376, or on a golden seal possessed by Charles V of France in 1379.²⁶ Some such familiar representation of the *Pas Saladin* perhaps influenced the illuminator of MS. fr. 2813, for there, on f. 473 v, among the leaders of the First Crusade is not Duke Robert of Normandy, but Richard Coeur de Lion of the Third Crusade. He wears his crown and his blazon of the three gold leopards of England.²⁷ But a mistake like this did not matter much; what did matter was the pride and inspiration which men were coming to feel in human history and its heroic records. Even in the early thirteenth century the compiler of the *Historia Regum Francorum* (to 1214) had thus expressed his purpose: "ad ostendendum quo deveniat humana sublimitas, ad exemplar vitae hoc opusculum attemptavi. . . . Historia est vitae speculum."²⁸ His prologue was taken up and expanded in 1276 by Primat in his French translations, *Les Grandes Chroniques de Saint-Denis*.²⁹ In commenting on these and other acts connected with the development of historiography in France, Professor Walpole (p. 358) has observed: "By 1276 educated Frenchmen of all sorts and conditions were

²⁴ R. S. Loomis, "The *Pas Saladin* in Art and Heraldry," *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Greene* (Princeton, New Jersey), pp. 83-91, origin, p. 90.

²⁵ The *Pas Saladin* was discussed by Gaston Paris, *Journal des Savants*, 1893, pp. 486-498, and was published by F. Lodeman, *MLN*, XII (1897), cols. 21-34, 84-96. Richard I of England, as duke of Normandy, was considered a vassal of the French crown.

²⁶ Loomis, "The *Pas Saladin*," p. 85.

²⁷ See above, n. 13.

²⁸ Quoted by R.N. Walpole, "Philip Mouskés and the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle," *University of California Publications in Modern Philology*, XXVI (1947), 356, from the complete prologue as printed in N. de Wailly's "Memoires, Chroniques de Saint Denis," *Académie des Inscriptions*, XVII, Pt. 1 (1848), 403-405, Appendix.

²⁹ Walpole, p. 417, n. 36, 42; also p. 359; "Between 1200 and 1276 . . . we see the separation of history from the poets and its establishment as a new literary genre."

reading in their own tongue official histories of their kings, identifying themselves with the national history as the inheritors of its past, the makers of its present and the example for those to whom its future would belong, finding entertainment in its action and moral profit in its teaching—a mirror of life indeed.”

There could hardly be a better commentary on the mood and purpose which, coupled with the hope for a new Crusade, had led, in 1378, to the selection of *Godfrey de Bouillon* as a subject for the royal *entremés*. In 1389 municipal, as well as royal, authorities may have participated in choosing the *Pas Saladin* for a street performance.³⁰ But it would not have been chosen had it not been a popular, familiar subject which “history,” as then understood, had made famous. At the same time and presumably for the same reasons, the Troy *entremés* was planned for lavish presentation before the young Charles VI. Mediaeval Frenchmen, like mediaeval Britons, liked to believe their race descended from the mighty Trojans of antiquity and in particular from that son of Hector, Francio, from whose name the French often derived their own. Even a late fourteenth-century manuscript such as B.N. fr. 2713, f. 4, has the conventional beginning of the ancient chronicles: “Le premier chapitre parle comment francois descendirent des Trojens. Quatre cens et quatre ans avant que rome fu fondee regnoit Priant en Troie la Grant. . . .”³¹

In the mid-fifteenth century, in connection with a huge Troy drama, we shall find this same sense of the historicity of the Troy story and its special significance for the French, a powerful, avowed inspiration. But it is of more immediate interest to note

³⁰ P. Sadron, “Notes sur l’organisation des représentations théâtrales en France au Moyen Age,” *Mélanges . . . offerts à Gustave Cohen*, pp. 205-218, observes (p. 209) the regularized use of the same places in Paris streets for the giving of outdoor performances.

³¹ The illumination on this same page, f. 4, shows the siege of Troy and Francio at Sicambre (cf. H. Martin, *La Miniature française du XIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1923), pp. 48, 95, Fig. 80; Bib. Nat., *Manuscrits à peintures*, p. 60. For a richly documented study of the Trojan descent and the Francus (Francio) legend, unknown before the seventh century, see Maria Klippel, *Die Darstellung der frankischen Trojanersage in Geschichtsschreibung and Dichtung vom Mittelalter bis zur Renaissance in Frankreich* (Marburg, 1936). This should be supplemented by Jacques Pujol, “Etymologies légendaires des mots *France* et *Gaule* pendant la Renaissance,” *PMLA*, LXXII (1957), 900-914, which continues the study of the Francus and Trojan legend into the age of disbelief. The legend was still widely read in the fourteenth century in the version in *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, ed. J. Viard, Soc. de l’Hist. de France, CXX (Paris, 1920-37), I, 9, 11 (“Francions fu fiuz d’Hector”). Jorga, *Mézières*, p. 30, notes his reference to the legend.

that by 1395 the transition had been made from the earlier dumbshows to secular drama, and a complete play exemplified that trend away from religious themes to those of "history" which we have noticed in the pantomimic *Godfrey of Bouillon*, the *Troy*, and the *Pas Saladin*.

Again we meet with the purposeful hand of Philippe de Mézières, who, having already translated into French Petrarch's Latin version of Boccaccio's story of Griselda, proceeded to dramatize his own French prose version, and to versify from it over seven hundred lines.³² This dramatized *l'Estoire de Griseldis* is known in a single, illustrated manuscript (B.N. MS. fr. 2203), possibly the one said to have been given Charles VI when he attended its performance. The Prologue affirms that the story is

D'une dame la vraye histoire	42
Qui tant est digne de memoire	
Et fu ceste hystoire averie	47
Au vray effect en Lombardie.	

This emphasis on the truth of the story calls to mind the same author's earlier exhortations to the young Charles VI, whose tutor he had been, to read "es hystoires authentique des IX preuz [the Nine Worthies], de la bataille de Troye[s], d'Alexandre et des Romains."³³ In a still extant letter, written in May-July 1395 to young King Richard II of England, Mézières urged him to read "le cronique autentique du dessus dit marquis de Saluce et de Grisildis, escripte par le solempnel docteur et souverain poète, maistre Francois Petrac."³⁴ It was still the ardent hope of the inveterate propagandist that, through the marriage of Richard to the little Isabelle, daughter of Charles VI, peace might be made between the two realms and so lead to their union in fighting the infidel. The letter has the same arguments that are offered in the play to its hero urging him to take a wife, and it was a Grisildis that Mézières wished for a wife for Richard. In Mrs. Frank's recent and authoritative book on French drama in

³² *L'Estoire de Griseldis*, ed. Barbara Craig (Lawrence, Kansas, 1954), pp. 3-10, Bibliography, pp. 69-70. The historic existence of Griseldis was not doubted by her supposed descendants. Cf. N. Jorga, *Thomas III, marquis de Saluces: Étude historique et littéraire* (St-Denis, 1893), pp. 82-85; E. Golenistcheff-Koutouzoff, *L'Histoire de Griseldis en France au XIV^e et au XV^e siècle* (Paris, 1933), p. 133 f. See below, n. 35.

³³ Jorga, *Mézières*, p. 26, n. 3, quoting from *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 482; Craig, edition of *Griseldis*, p. 5.

the Middle Ages, she, who had already done so much to establish the authorship of *Grisildis*, acclaims it, "as our first example of a French play that is serious but non-religious."³⁵ She observes that an added character in the play, the aged "quint chevalier," is a kind of self-portrait of Mézières himself. Certainly the author was using developed drama here as purposefully, and for the same purpose, but for a different king, as, seventeen years before, he had (in all probability) instigated and directed the Godfrey de Bouillon *entremés*. In each case it was by a past example (which he believed to be true) from human history that he wished to influence his present time; as the personal friend of Charles V and Charles VI he had unusual opportunity to present his ideas before the court.

Among the plays subsequent to the *Grisildis* of 1395 but having likewise secular and historical themes, Mrs. Frank³⁶ lists the *Siège d'Orleans* (about 1470), in which for the first time Joan of Arc entered the stage world, the *Mystère (or Vie) de S. Louis*, written before 1472 and played in Paris, the *Mystère de Jules César* at Amboise in 1500, and *l'Istoire de la Destruction de Troye la grant*,³⁷ which Jacques Milet of Orleans wrote between 1450-52. The first three have palpably historical subjects whatever unhistorical elements intrude into them, but to savor the sense of historicity which Milet wished to give his Troy drama, we must turn to his own words. He was basing it on Guido delle Colonne's *Historia Destructionis Trojae*, the thirteenth-century Latin prose version which more or less superseded, as being more authoritative, the earlier and finer *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-More.³⁸ Milet was writing as a typically mediaeval lover of the ancient story, as a typically mediaeval dramatist using the familiar *mise-en-scène* of a many-mansioned stage which included ship, towers, and many blazoned banners. Eighteen of the Trojan princes had such banners and they may have been introduced, as Thomas Oliver³⁹ has suggested, in honor of the noble families of France.

³⁵ Frank, *Medieval French Drama*, ch. XV (*Griseldis*); also *MLN*, LI (1936), 217-222. Cf. Craig, p. 5.

³⁶ *Medieval French Drama*, pp. 209-210.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 206-209. The first edition of Milet's play was reproduced by E. Stengel (Marburg-Leipzig, 1883)

³⁸ T. E. Oliver, *Jacques Milet's Drama, "La Destruction de Troye la Grant:" Its Principal Source; Its Dramatic Structure* (Heidelberg, 1899), section numbers 8-11 ff. He established Guido delle Colonne's *Historia Destructionis Troiae* as Milet's primary source.

³⁹ Oliver, No. 244. The suggestion still invites investigation.

Milet was young and ambitious when he wrote his play with its compliments to French princes (Prologue, vss. 80-105) bearing the name Charles, and his glorification of his own sovereign, King Charles VII (1422-61), whose name in the play Priam sees rising to the top of the Wheel of Fortune (vss. 25064-25112).⁴⁰ Milet may have known, through reading Froissart, that the Troy story had been chosen for the royal entertainment in 1389, but he probably did not know of the *Jeu du Siège de Troie* performed at Avignon in April 1400.⁴¹ The Troy story had attained new life in the fourteenth century, but it was as something ancient, memorable, and true that Milet turned the story into a play of 27984 verses intended for a four-day presentation. There is no evidence of its actual performance, but twelve manuscripts and as many early editions show that it had success in book form.⁴² In his Prologue (vs. 272) and again in vs. 25076 he asserted that five thousand years had passed since Troy fell. He pictures himself, most unhistorically to be sure, as wandering in a flowery meadow, and finding there a beautiful tree with fair shields hanging upon it which represent *le lineage de France* (vs. 290). Digging down into the roots of the tree, he finds ancient Trojan weapons. For him, as for his French ancestors from the eighth century, the real root of the matter was their belief in the descent of the French from the Trojans. It was this thought, still one to conjure with, which inspired Milet to write his huge play, to pay homage as best he could to the enduring thought of *Troye la grant*.

Trouuay les armes des troyans,⁴³ 270
 Donc lost de France est descendu
 Passé apres de cinq mille ans.
 Lors ie me prins a pourpenser
 De faire listoire de troye,
 Et a mon pouoyr composer
 Tout au mieulx que ie pourroye.

⁴⁰ Oliver, No. 2-4, on Milet's reference to "Charles septiesme" (vs. 25064 ff.). See Petit de Julleville, *Les Mystères*, II, 572, for identification of the three princes named Charles in the Prologue.

⁴¹ Gustave Cohen, *Études d'histoire du théâtre en France au Moyen Age et à la Renaissance* (Paris, 1956), 164-166, cites an Italian letter, written in Avignon on 14 June 1400, which refers to the *Jeu du Siège de Troie*, as recently played there and as similar to that at which the Duc d'Anjou had been present in (so Cohen conjectures) 1382.

⁴² Frank, *Medieval French Drama*, p. 206.

⁴³ Stengel's ed., Prologue, pp. 4-5.

Et pour ce que bien ie sauoye
Que aultreffois a esté escripte
En latin et en prose laye,
Si ay voulu eüter reddicte, 280
Et ay proposé de la faire
Par parsonnages seullement,
Pour monstrier le vray exemplaire
A lueil tout euidamment,
Comme il appert tout clerement
A ceulx qui la lisent ou voient,
En lonneur et exaulcement
Des escussions qui y paroient,
Et semblablement a lonneur
De tout le lignaige de France. 290

GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT*

THE hero of *Gawain and the Green Knight* (GGK)¹ is likened to a pearl beside a pea (vs. 2364), and so might the poem itself be reckoned among its contemporaries. It moves over an almost flawless structure as smoothly as supple skin over the bones of the hand. With the exception of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, no other Middle English romance approaches its artistic and spiritual maturity, its brilliant realism, its dramatic vigour, its poetic sensitivity to nuances of word and mood, its humour, its nobility of spirit.

This treasure of Middle English poetry exists in only one manuscript (British Museum, Cotton Nero A X), dated by the handwriting of its one scribe and the costumes of its very crude illustrations about 1400.² The romance has 2,530 lines written in stanzas running from twelve to thirty-eight long lines of unrimed alliterative verse, each stanza concluding with a "bob and wheel" of five short riming lines.³ The author's mastery of alliterative phraseology predicates a close acquaintance with antecedent alliterative poems, but the extent of his indebtedness to earlier

* From *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. S. Loomis (1959), pp. 528-40.

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¹ All references to GGK, unless otherwise indicated, are to the edition by I. Gollancz, re-edited by M. Day and M. S. Serjeantson, EETS (1940); bibliography, pp. lxxvii-lxxii. Other editions are by J. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon (T & G, Oxford, 1925, 1930, 1936); and by E. Pons (Paris, 1946, with French translation). For recent renderings into modern English see T. H. Banks (New York, 1929); K. Hare (London, 1946, 1948); M. R. Ridley (London, 1950, 1955); Gwyn Jones (London, 1952).

² A facsimile of the manuscript was published with an introduction by I. Gollancz, EETS, 1923. For description of manuscript see GGK, pp. ix ff, and R. S. and L. H. Loomis, *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (New York, 1938), pp. 138 f., with illustrations of miniatures (figs. 389-91). On scribal matters see Greg in *Library*, xiii (1933), 188-91, and Oakden, *ibid.* xiv. 353-8.

³ J. P. Oakden, *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English*, i (Manchester, 1930), pp. 177 f., 218, 251-5, 266. See GGK, p. lxxviii; T & G, pp. 118-21.

English verse or of his own influence on later verse is still largely undetermined.⁴ His poetic preeminence, however, his outstanding artistry, have been searchingly studied and praised since 1839 when, in his *Syr Gawayne*, Sir Frederick Madden first published the poem.

The manuscript contains three other poems which, because of close similarities in vocabulary, phrasing, style, and spirit to *GGK*, have led to a general belief in their common authorship.⁵ From different interpretations of the exquisite, elegiac-seeming *Pearl*, the homiletic *Patience* and *Purity (Cleanness)*, and *GGK*, conjectural biographies and personalities have been built up for the poet, and several identifications have been proposed.⁶ None of them, however, has won acceptance, and the identity of the "Master Anonymous" remains a mystery. Was he a monk, a minstrel, a learned clerk, an official in some lordly household, or himself a man of rank and wealth?⁷ In any case he wrote as one familiar with courtly life, its pleasures, luxuries, arts, and ways.⁸

The realistic references in *GGK* to North Wales, Anglesey,

⁴ Oakden, op. cit. ii, *passim*. For theories about relation of *GGK* to *The Green Knight* see G. L. Kittredge, *Study of GGK* (Cambridge, Mass., 1916), pp. 125-35, 282-9; Hulbert in *MP*, xiii (1915-16), 49 ff., 461 f. O. Löhmann, *Die Sage von GGK, Albertus Univ., Schriften der geisteswissenschaftlichen Reihe*, xvii (1938), 24-36. For relation to *Wars of Alexander* see *GGK*, pp. xiii-xviii; for connexion of *GGK*, vss. 2414 ff., with *King Alisaunder* see King in *MLR*, xxix (1934), 435 f. For possible influence of *GGK* on Chaucer's *Squire's Tale* see Chapman in *MLN*, lxviii (1953), 521-4; Whiting in *Medieval Studies*, ix (1947), 230 ff. For the influence of *GGK* on a poem by Humphrey Newton (d. 1536) of Cheshire, see Robbins in *MLN*, lviii (1943), 361-6; *PMLA*, lxxv (1950), 249-81; Cutler in *JEGP*, li (1952), 562-70.

⁵ *GGK*, pp. x-xiii; *Purity*, ed. R. J. Menner (New Haven, 1920), pp. xix-xxvii; Oakden, op. cit. i. 72-87, 251-3; ii. 88-93, 393 ff.; D. Everett, *Essays on Middle English Literature* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 68-96. The attribution to one author has been questioned for reasons more ingenious than convincing by J. W. Clark in *JEGP*, xlix (1950), 60 ff.; *MLN*, lxxv (1950), 232 ff.; *MLQ*, xii (1951), 387 ff.

⁶ For proposed identifications see *GGK*, pp. xviii f. For notably perceptive comments on the poet's nature, learning, background see *Pearl*, ed. C. Osgood (Boston, 1906), pp. xlvi-xlix; H. L. Savage, *The Gawain-Poet* (Chapel Hill, 1956), ch. i.

⁷ Despite the poet's piety and knowledge of biblical and theological matters, his secularity has been increasingly emphasized. See *Pearl*, ed. Osgood, pp. lii-liv; T & G, p. xx. Oakden, op. cit., i. 257-61, thought him a retainer of John of Gaunt; Savage, op. cit., pp. 206-13, would assign him to the household of John's French brother-in-law, Enguerrand de Coucy, of whose chivalric character and English experiences, 1363-77, Savage (pp. 99-117) thought he detected some reflections in *GGK*. But the content and genesis of the poem seem best accounted for by the literary sources.

⁸ For the poet's knowledge of music see Chapman in *PMLA*, xlvi (1931), 177-81; for courtly manners and sports see discussion below.

and the wilderness of Wirral in Cheshire (vss. 697-701) are unusual. The scenic descriptions, the extensive use of words of Scandinavian origin, the dialect, all place the author's home in the North-west Midland area.⁹ The detailed account of the so-called Green Chapel and the great castle near by have suggested even more precise localizations.¹⁰ The architecture, the costume, the armour, so accurately described, are appropriate to a date between 1360 and 1400, and of the four poems in the manuscript *GGK* is considered the latest.¹¹ Though no one has succeeded in connecting the green girdle worn as a baldric by the knights of Arthur's household (vss. 2515 ff.) with any historic order of chivalry, Gawain's wearing a costume like that of a knight of the Garter (vss. 1928 ff.) and the insertion of the Garter motto after the close of the poem have tempted some to think that the author wrote under the patronage of a knight of that order, renowned for chivalry and possessed of estates in the North-west Midlands, where the poet was at home.¹²

The romance according to vss. 31-36, was heard "in toun", but was also known to the author in a book (vs. 690). He proposes to tell it in "letteres loken", that is, in alliterative verse.

SOURCES AND ANALOGUES

The main framework of the plot is known as the Challenge or the Beheading Game, and into this has been skillfully fitted

⁹ Southern Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire have been suggested for the poet's home. For bibliography see *GGK*, p. lxviii, and Menner in *PMLA*, xxxvii (1922), 503-26; Serjeantson in *RES*, iii (1927), 327 f.; Oakden, *op. cit.* i. 82-87; Savage, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-33.

¹⁰ Tolkien and Gordon (p. 94), following Madden, accepted Volsty Castle and the neighbouring Chapel of the Grene, Cumberland. Oakden, *op. cit.* i. 257 f., proposed John of Gaunt's castle of Clitheroe, Lancs. Mabel Day (*GGK*, p. xx) identified the Green Chapel with a small, rocky "cave projecting from a hillside" at Wetton Mill, Staffs., but confused it with Thor's cave (Thursehouse), a huge cavern in a cliff a mile away, which could not possibly fit the poet's description (vss. 2178-83). The supposition that the Green Chapel was a megalithic barrow (*GGK*, note to vs. 2172) is questioned by Brewer in *Notes and Queries*, cxci (1948), 194 f.

¹¹ *GGK*, p. xiii; T & G, pp. xx-xxii; Brett in *MLR*, xxii (1927), 451-8; Savage, *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 141 f., 222.

¹² Connexion of the poem with the Order of the Garter was maintained by I. Jackson in *Anglia*, xxxvii (1913), 393-423; Cargill and Schlauch in *PMLA*, xliii (1928), 118-23; and by Savage, *op. cit.*, *passim* (see especially pp. 146 ff. for a list of Garter knights with West Midland holdings). For those opposed to the Garter connexion see Menner, *Purity*, pp. xxvii ff.; Hulbert in *MP*, xiii. 710-18; T & G, pp. xx, 117.

a second major element called the Temptation. The earliest version of the Challenge is found in *Bricriu's Feast* (*BF*), a composite Irish saga of the eighth century extant in a manuscript antedating 1106.¹³ The saga contains, in fact, two variants of the Challenge (*BF*, p. 99) and refers to other book versions. The first, or "Terror," version is shorter and more archaic; the second, the "Champion's Bargain," is more elaborate. In each a shape-shifting enchanter challenges Cuchulainn and two other Ulster heroes, likewise contending for the championship, to exchange with him a decapitating blow. Twice the challenger is decapitated but walks away with his head and returns the next day, his head restored to its place. Cuchulainn alone keeps his part of the bargain, and after receiving one or more pretended blows from the challenger's axe, he is acclaimed the champion. When this legend passed out of Ireland, it lost its most primitive and savage elements, and, somewhat rationalized and simplified, it passed eventually into several Arthurian romances. Of these, *GGK* has preserved by far the largest number of features which go back to some form of the Irish saga.¹⁴

In a fundamental study Kittredge summarized the Challenge as it appeared in these romances.¹⁵ The earliest extant French version forms part of the so-called *Livre de Caradoc*,¹⁶ included in the First Continuation of Chrétien's *Perceval*. Though the hero of the Challenge is Caradoc, not Gawain, it presents the closest correspondence to *GGK*. Both poems transform the court of Ulster into that of Arthur, and refer to his custom of waiting for a marvel to happen;¹⁷ alike they mention the queen's presence and describe the challenger, not, as in the Irish, as a huge and hideous churl (*bachlach*), but as a tall knight who rides into Arthur's hall. Both offer parallels to the Irish challenger's grim

¹³ *Fled Bricrend or Feast of Bricriu* (*BF*), ed G. Henderson (London, 1899), with English translation; Kittredge, op. cit., pp. 9-26.

¹⁴ A. Buchanan in *PMLA*, xlvii (1932), 328 f.; R. S. Loomis, *Wales and the Arthurian Legend* (Cardiff, 1956), pp. 77 f.

¹⁵ Kittredge, op. cit., pp. 26-74. Kittredge's argument that the "Champion's Bargain" was the sole source of the Challenge was refuted by Alice Buchanan, loc. cit., pp. 316-25.

¹⁶ For texts of the Challenge see *Continuations of the Old French Perceval*, ed. W. Roach (Philadelphia, 1949-55), i. 89-97; ii. 209-19; iii. 141-56.

¹⁷ Sixteen romances tell of this custom. Chrétien's *Perceval*, ed. Hilka, p. 668; J. R. Reinhard, *Survival of Geis in Medieval Romance* (Halle, 1933), pp. 182-95. The reference in *Caradoc* may well have been borrowed from a more original part of the *Perceval*. See *Continuations*, ed. Roach, i. 232; ii. 371; iii. 196.

proposal, his taunting the courtiers with their hesitancy, his decapitation, and his departure. Both tell how the challenge is accepted, not by three successive heroes as in the Irish, but by one, who is described as Arthur's nephew and who modestly speaks of himself as the most foolish of knights. Both romances remark that anyone accepting such a challenge would be mad; both speak of the grief of the knights and ladies for the hero; both add to the Irish hero's protest against the challenger's delay in striking a taunt as to his cowardice; both change the interval of a day between the challenger's decapitation and his return to a year. Long before the Irish antecedents of the Challenge had been discovered the likeness between the episode in the *Livre de Caradoc* and *GGK* led to the belief that this French romance was the immediate source of *GGK*.¹⁸ But Kittredge's conclusion that they were independent versions of a lost French story seems justified, for only thus could those Irish features which are found exclusively in one poem or the other be accounted for.

Among the Irish elements to be found in *GGK* but not in *Caradoc*, Kittredge (pp. 32-34) and others have noted the following: the challenger's size, his fierce eyes, silence as he enters the hall, his great axe (in *Caradoc* a sword), his high praise of the court, his exit carrying his head, not, as in *Caradoc*, replacing it on his shoulders. To these Irish elements, still preserved in *GGK*, another may well be added. In *GGK* alone the Challenger is named Bercilak (vs. 2445); as the Green Knight he plays the *same role*, is the *same character*, as the Challenger in the "Champion's Bargain." There he is repeatedly called a *bachlach* (churl), a trisyllabic word in Irish.¹⁹ Changed in transmission, its meaning lost, the Irish common noun seems to have survived in the English name and best explains its origin.

Though so much in *GGK* was thus ultimately derived from the "Champion's Bargain," other elements came from the

¹⁸ M. C. Thomas, *Gawain and the Green Knight, A Comparison with the French Perceval* (Zurich, 1883), pp. 34-68. See criticism in R, xii. 376; J. L. Weston, *Legend of Sir Gawain* (London, 1887), pp. 88 ff.

¹⁹ Hulbert established in *Manly Anniversary Studies* (Chicago, 1923), p. 12-19, the manuscript reading as Bercilak, and identified the name with that of Bertelak, Bercelai, emissary of the False Guenièvre in the Prose *Lancelot*. The reading was accepted by T & G, p. 114. R. S. Loomis in *Celtic Myth and Arthurian Romance* (New York, 1927) found its origin in Irish *bachlach*. Roland Smith in *JEGP*, xlv (1946), 16 ff., questioning this derivation, proposed a hypothetical Irish form *Bresalach*, meaning contentious, and sought to relate the Green Knight to figures outside the Ulster cycle and without any connexion with the head-cutting episode.

“Terror” version, also found in *Bricriu’s Feast*.²⁰ In this tale the hero and his two rivals are not tested at the royal court but, journeying into a wild region, stop at a house and receive a guide from their host. They go to Terror, a shape-shifter, who proposes the head-cutting test. Three times, like the Green Knight, he makes a feint with his axe at the hero’s neck. The corresponding features in *GGK*, especially the placing of this testing episode away from Arthur’s court, establish the influence of the “Terror” version upon the romance.

Besides the *Livre de Caradoc*, only one other French text provides a version of the Challenge which is significant for *GGK*, namely *Perlesvaus*,²¹ dated 1191-1230. The Challenge is here set not in a palace hall, but in a Waste City, and its hero is Lancelot. Though differing widely in other respects from *GGK*, it offers three noteworthy resemblances: the challenger whets his axe with a whetstone (1.6674) as the hero approaches to fulfill his bargain; the hero shrinks from the blow; he is sharply rebuked.²² These parallels, supplemented by resemblances in phrase, again argue for literary borrowing, whether directly by the English poet or through a French intermediary.²³

Thus we have three closely related Arthurian versions of the Challenge or Beheading Game. Since they do not agree as to the name of the hero, there is no certainty as to whether Caradoc, Lancelot, or Gawain was the first of Arthur’s knights to meet a head-cutting challenger. It is remarkable that the challenger in no version antedating *GGK* appears as a green giant, clad in green and riding a green horse.²⁴ Explanations for this greenness

²⁰ Kittredge, op. cit., pp. 97-101; D’Arbois de Jubainville, *Cours de Littérature Celtique*, vi (Paris, 1892), pp. 132-5.

²¹ *Perlesvaus*, ed. Nitze and others, i. 136-8, 284-6; discussed ii. 281-3.

²² Kittredge, op. cit., pp. 52-61, noted the weakening in this episode of the supernatural element.

²³ See *GGK*, pp. xxxi ff., for phrasal parallels. Nitze noted (*Perlesvaus*, ii. 3) that the Bodleian manuscript of *Perlesvaus* was once owned by Sir Brian Fitzalan of Bedale, Yorks. Possibly this very manuscript was read by the *GGK* poet.

²⁴ No extant French text before the prose *Perceval* printed in 1530 (Roach, *Continuations*, i. p. xxxii) supports Kittredge’s belief (pp. 32, 140) that the challenger wore green in an early form of the *Livre de Caradoc*. For him, as for Hulbert (*MP*, xiii. 456 ff.), the challenger was green because in folk-lore green is often a fairy colour. R. S. Loomis in *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (New York, 1949), p. 279, n. 7, explains the colour as due to the ambiguity of the Irish and Welsh adjective *glas*, meaning either grey or green, and points out that Curoi, the Irish prototype of the Green Knight, was repeatedly referred to as “the man in the gray mantle,” though the word *glas* is not the word chosen. See

have been sought in mythology, folk ritual, and folk-lore,²⁵ but since the ultimate sources of the Challenge—the two tales incorporated in *Bricriu's Feast*—provide no support in the way of hints of vegetation rites or concepts, and since in *GGK* the Green Knight and his other self, Bercilak, have only mid-winter associations,²⁶ his greenness there can hardly be due to vegetable traits.

Fitted into the framework of the test by decapitation is another test—the three successive temptations to which Gawain is subjected by the wife of the Green Knight. Though the finesse with which these scenes were developed was the poet's own contribution, yet the situation itself—the aggressive wooing of a reluctant young man in bed by a lovely lady—was already employed by romancers in the twelfth century. It is easily recognizable in the *Lanzelet* of Ulrich von Zatzikhoven,²⁷ which he translated from the Anglo-Norman shortly after 1194.

Lanzelet and two companions are welcomed at the castle of Galagandreiz, a rich forester. Their host's daughter arrays herself sumptuously and at night tempts each of the three knights in turn in the most wanton manner. The story anticipates *GGK* in its emphasis on her elaborate dress and her young beauty, in the

Buchanan in *PMLA*, xlvii (1932), 327-30. No historic person seems to have been called the Green Knight. But two fourteenth-century Englishmen, Sir Ralph Holmes and Simon Newton, were known as the Green Squire. See Braddy in *MLN*, lxvii (1952), 240 ff.; Highfield in *MedAev*, xxii (1953), 18-23. Highfield studies an important West Midland family of Newtons of the type which might have produced the author of *GGK*. See above, n. 4, for the Cheshire Humphrey Newton (1536) who used *GGK*.

²⁵ E. K. Chambers in his *Medieval Stage* (Oxford, 1902), i. 117, 185, and Nitze in *MP*, xxxiii (1936), 351-65, derive the Challenge from vegetation ritual or myth. Speirs in *Scrutiny*, xvi (1949), 270-300, urged that a ritual underlying the story and "the poet's belief in its value as myth is what gives the poem its life." This ignores both the power of individual genius and the evidence of the Irish stories of the Challenge, the sources of *GGK*, which are not easily susceptible to interpretation as vegetation ritual. Even more reckless is the statement of Francis Berry in *The Age of Chaucer* (Pelican Book, 1954, p. 158) that the poet's awareness of "the generic forces of life . . . realizes itself in the image of the Green Knight; . . . He testifies to an assumption that moral behavior . . . is subservient to and dependent on something even more primary—creative energy. . . . Gawain and his society humbly come to terms with the Green Knight."

²⁶ Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*, pp. 208 ff., 230 ff., 280 ff., derived certain episodes in Arthurian romances from Irish texts preserving mythic concepts of sun and storm gods. These sometimes survived as dramatic or picturesque features, but it is to be doubted whether the French authors or the *Gawain*-poet who introduced such elements were conscious of their mythical origin and significance.

²⁷ Ulrich von Zatzikhoven, *Lanzelet*, trans. K. G. T. Webster (New York, 1951), pp. 34-43, and notes 37, 43.

way she sits beside each sleeping knight and wakes him, in her offer of a gold ring and its rejection, in her urgent plea to hear talk of love, and in her frank proposals. The outcome of the temptation scenes differs from that in *GGK* since, though Lanzelet's companions repel the lady's advances, Lanzelet himself is easily persuaded. None the less, the lady's behaviour and conversation are similar enough to those of Bercilak's wife, though on a much lower level, as to suggest that the two poems were following the same original pattern. The Anglo-Norman source of *Lanzelet* also anticipated *GGK* in making Galagandreiz, like Bercilak, a notably human figure; despite warnings of his cruelty, he performs kindly services for his guests, and has almost nothing of the supernatural, gigantic, or imperious qualities of other notable hosts in Arthurian romance.²⁸ Of special interest is the challenge which he issues to Lanzelet the morning after the temptation scenes—a challenge to throw knives at each other in alternation. It is as truly a *jeu parti* as the beheading by alternation in *GGK* and *Bricriu's Feast*,²⁹ and provides the earliest instance of the combination of the Challenge theme with that of the Temptation.

The *Lanzelet* version did not include the strange feature which Kittredge (pp. 79 ff.) pointed out in other Arthurian romances as well as in *GGK*, namely, that the temptress was the wife of the host and that she wooed at her husband's wish.³⁰ One of these, *Yder*, offers a striking parallel, representing the lady of the castle as making violent love, at her husband's order, to the hero as he lies in bed in the hall.³¹ In other analogues cited by Kittredge her role is passive; she is constrained by her husband or father to admit the guest to her bed in order to test him. This situation presents, as Mabel Day has remarked, but a shadowy likeness to *GGK*. Equally remote from it are two repellent Temptation tales in Latin and French versions of the *Vitae Patrum*.³²

A significant analogue to the Temptation occurs in the

²⁸ For these figures, see Kittredge, *op. cit.*, Index, Imperious Host; Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*, chap. xlvii.

²⁹ Kittredge, *op. cit.*, p. 21-23, 219-21, mentioned the combat in *Lanzelet* only as an instance of duelling by alternation and said nothing of the related Temptation.

³⁰ Kittredge summarized (pp. 83-101) analogues to the Temptation in *Ider*, *Carl of Carlisle*, *Chevalier à l'Épée*, *Hunbaut*.

³¹ *Iderroman*, ed. H. Gelzer (Dresden, 1913), vvs. 185-510, and p. lv.

³² E. von Schaubert, "Der englische Ursprung von *GGK*," *ES*, lxii (1923), 330-446. These tales have been widely but uncritically quoted as true analogues. The author's low estimate of the English poet's skill is almost unique. See *YWES*, iv (1923), 52.

Vulgate *Lancelot* and has been proposed as perhaps “the immediate cause for the insertion of Morgain la Fée into the English poem.”³³ This enchantress, who in the course of the French narrative thrice attempts to seduce Lancelot in vain,³⁴ sends her damsel, a younger self as it were, to effect the same end. Three times the girl employs her amorous arts on the recumbent hero. From this episode, with the instigating background figure of Morgain and the foreground figure of the young, active seductress, it is but a step to the two figures in *GGK*, the aged Morgain,³⁵ prime mover in the plot, and the agent of temptation, Bercilak’s young wife. She was, no less than Bercilak, a servitor of the resident goddess who sat highest at their table (vs. 1001), who had already forced him to enact the Green Knight’s cruel part, and who, presumably, also forced him to order his wife to tempt their guest (vss. 2446-63). No wonder that the young wife was at heart Gawain’s “enemy kene” (vs. 2406). Despite his moral sensitivity, the poet imputes no moral obloquy to the lordly pair who yet were helpless in the power of that malignant goddess. The might of Morgan le Fay (vs. 2446) was, for Gawain himself, a sufficient explanation and exculpation for all he had endured and made him able to part from the Green Knight on most friendly terms.

The concept of Morgain as an evil enchantress, a witch, had appeared in Hartmann von Aue’s *Erek* by 1190; her origin in Celtic mythology and the amazing diversity of her roles in medieval romance have been studied by Lucy Paton and R. S. Loomis.³⁶ Her wanton traits reappear in many amorous and related Arthurian figures; as we have seen, there are the temptresses

³³ Hulbert in *Manly Anniversary Studies*, p. 18.

³⁴ H. O. Sommer, *Vulgate Version*, iv. 123-8; v, 91-93, 215-18; *Spec*, xx (1945), 186.

³⁵ Kittredge (pp. 131-5) and Hulbert in *MP*, xiii. 454, regard Morgain as a late and poorly integrated element in *GGK*, mainly because she, though a supernatural person, failed in her purposes and did not foresee her failure. But in medieval romance enchanters and enchantresses often suffer defeat. Baughan in *ELH*, xvii (1950), 241-51, defended Morgain’s role by the untenable argument that she had sent the Green Knight to purge Arthur’s court of moral evil, and that the Beheading Game was “an apotheosization of chastity.” Likewise unrealistic is the conclusion of J. F. Eagan in *The Import of Color Symbolism in GGK* (St. Louis, 1949), p. 83.

³⁶ L. A. Paton, *Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance* (Boston, 1903), chap. vii, on the Chapelle Morgain in the Val sans Retour; R. S. Loomis in *Spec*, xx (1945), 183-203; reprinted in *Wales*, pp. 105-30; Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*, index sub Morgain; Hulbert, in *Manly Anniversary Studies*, pp. 16 ff.; T & G, notes on vss. 2452, 2460.

in *Lanzelet* and *Yder*, and the splitting of Morgain's personality into two selves in the Vulgate *Lancelot*. The author of *GGK*, apparently familiar with this older dichotomy, has effectively contrasted the goddess, grown old and wrinkled, with the young beauty who is at once Morgain's other self and agent,³⁷ but who has also a personality of her own.

The earliest example surviving in medieval fiction of a Temptation approximating in curious ways that in *GGK* is to be met in the *mabinogi* of *Pwyll*, attributed to the eleventh century.³⁸ Arawn, a huntsman and an Otherworld king, like the Green Knight himself (vs. 992), arranged that Pwyll should be lavishly entertained in his absence in his palace and lie with his own wife as a test of his chastity and loyalty.³⁹ At the year's end Pwyll, like Gawain, was required to meet a supernatural enemy at a river-crossing. The differences between *Pwyll* and *GGK* forbid any thought of direct literary connexion, but undeniably *Pwyll* offers the oldest example of a traditional story pattern in which carnal temptation, whether passively or actively offered, and a Hospitable Host who constrains wife or daughter to tempt a guest, are recurrent themes. It not only anticipates the conjunction of these and other elements in *GGK* and its analogues, but it at least suggests, as they do not, in its mysterious figure of Arawn and in the Welsh folk-lore connected with him, a clue to the mid-winter associations of Bercilak and his connexion with Morgain la Fée.⁴⁰ In *Pwyll* the still half-mythic Arawn hunts with fairy hounds, wears grey wool, and engages in annual combats with Havgan (Summer-White)—an apparent reminiscence of the strife of summer and winter. In Welsh folk-lore Arawn was also identified with that Wild Huntsman who, in Welsh as in European folk-lore,

³⁷ *Sire Gauvain et le Chevalier Vert*, ed. E. Pons (Paris, 1946), p. 74, on Morgain as a foil to Bercilak's wife.

³⁸ *Mabinogion*, trans. G. and T. Jones, Everyman's Lib., pp. 1-9; for date see p. ix. In *JEGP*, xlii (1943), 170-81, and in *Wales*, chap. vi, R. S. Loomis detected in *Pwyll* four features also combined in *GGK*: the royal huntsman-host; the hero's resistance to the temptation presented by the host's fair wife with the latter's connivance; the anniversary combat; its localization at a river crossing. For other cases of the influence on Arthurian romance of traditions in *Pwyll* see Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*, index sub *Pwyll*.

³⁹ These are precisely the virtues tested in *GGK*. In *Pwyll* Arawn's wife, on learning it was her husband's friend, not her husband, who had slept chastely beside her, said to Arawn: "Strong hold hadst thou on a comrade for warding off fleshly temptation and for keeping faith with thee." Cf. Gawain's fears (vss. 1775 f.) that "he should commit sin [i.e., lechery] and be a traitor to that man."

⁴⁰ *JEGP*, xlii. 181-3; Loomis, *Wales*, pp. 81-85.

rode with his dogs on the winter winds. As late as 1276 it was remembered by Adam de la Halle that Morgain la Fée had once had for lover Hellekin, chief of the "chasse furieuse," "le gringneur prinche qui soit en faerie." Before this date, then, the wanton Morgain was associated with a wild huntsman of whom, perhaps, some faint traditional trace remains in the wintry world of Bercilak, in the fury of his three hunts, in the occasional wildness of his manner (vs. 1087). But in any case Bercilak as regal host and mid-winter huntsman, as tester, through his own wife, of a hero, as a shape-shifter, finds an ancient prototype in the Welsh Arawn.

The Challenge and the Temptation, then, originated as entirely distinct stories. Who was responsible for their fusion into one of the best plots in medieval fiction?⁴¹ We have seen that both elements appear combined in *Lanzelet*, and that this form of the Temptation, if read in the Anglo-Norman source of *Lanzelet*, may even have provided some suggestions for the *Gawain*-poet. But in other respects *Lanzelet* differs so widely from the English poem (and from *Bricriu's Feast*, with its early versions of the Challenge) that it cannot be regarded as the model for the combination in *GGK*. It is, therefore, still an open question whether the English author derived the Challenge and the Temptation from separate lost French texts (as well as the *Caradoc* version of the Challenge and the *Perlesvaus* version of the Temptation) and fitted the two stories together; or whether he found this highly artistic combination ready made by some French poet of unusual talent. Even if the latter alternative could be proved correct, one can hardly doubt that the English poet found large scope for his own genius in the adaptation of the plot to his special purposes and ideals.

He may well, indeed, have provided the one plot element which is completely non-Celtic in origin. The mutual promise of Bercilak and Gawain, to give each other what each has won at the end of each day, motivates a whole series of consequences. The motif of an Exchange of Winnings, as Hulbert demonstrated,⁴² appeared in a medieval Latin poem known as the *Miles Gloriosus*. A poor knight becomes the partner of a rich

⁴¹ See A. C. Baugh, *Literary History of England* (New York, 1948), pp. 236-8; G. Kane, *Middle English Literature* (London, 1951), pp. 73-76; *Sire Gauvain*, ed. Pons, p. 15.

⁴² *MP*, xiii. 699 f. The text of the *Miles* is published by G. Cohen, *La Comédie Latine en France au XII^e Siècle* (Paris, 1931), i. 181-210.

citizen; they agree to exchange their winnings. The citizen's faithless wife becomes the knight's mistress and gives him of her husband's treasure. The husband, suspicious, tries thrice to trap the knight, but is ultimately driven forth from his own home. This *fabliau*, now thought to have been written about 1175 in the Loire valley,⁴³ could have contributed nothing but the exchange idea to *GGK*. No other Arthurian narrative makes any use of the motif, and the deftness with which it is integrated into *GGK* bespeaks the English poet's skill in design and his sensitive perception of character. Gawain, facing the deadly head-cutting test, keeps the protective girdle given him by Bercilak's wife. He breaks his promise and presently suffers deep shame and remorse. The poet, aware of weakness even in the noblest, thus saves his hero from a "schematic perfection" and humanizes him by his fault and his pain. This treatment of the Exchange motif can hardly be due to anyone but the Englishman who so deliberately fashioned his whole story to a "fine issue" and a finer end.

LITERARY ART

The artistry which is revealed in the construction and style of *GGK* is exceptional. Kittredge noted (p. 4) passages which must be considered, because of their individuality, the poet's own. They include the traditional yet original passage on the seasons; the elaborate account of Gawain's arming, so precise and so contemporaneous in detail; the spirited hunting scenes equally exact and expert; the courtly dialogues between Gawain and his temptress, which reveal such delicacy of characterization. This sophisticated familiarity with varied aspects of aristocratic life and thinking prompts the question whether it was due to observation only or came from the intimate awareness of one who had been born to high estate and "gentillesse."⁴⁴

The poem bears witness not only to the author's acquaintance with earlier romances in French and English,⁴⁵ but also to

⁴³ E. Faral, *Les Arts Poétiques du XII^e Siècle et du XIII^e* (Paris, 1924), pp. 3-6; F. J. Raby, *History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1934), ii. 65 ff.

⁴⁴ G. Mathew, "Ideals of Knighthood in Late-Fourteenth Century England," *Studies in Medieval History Presented to F. M. Powicke* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 354-62, notes similarities between the Chandos Herald's characterization of the Black Prince and that of Gawain in *GGK*.

⁴⁵ Hulbert noted in *Manly Anniversary Studies*, pp. 16-19, that with two exceptions all the names in *GGK* occur in the French *Vulgate* romances. See also

his awareness of literary types. He speaks of his creation as a "laye" (vs. 30). The decapitation of the Green Knight is compared to the playing of an interlude (vs. 472), a short dramatic performance introduced between the courses of a banquet.⁴⁶ Indeed, *GGK* seems to interfuse the well-knit, romantic matter of the former type with the dramatic manner of the latter. It keeps the unified structure of the Breton lais, and, like them, concerns itself with marvels and an exclusively aristocratic world.⁴⁷ But in preserving their pattern, the *Gawain*-poet transformed their fragile charm. Almost alone among poets before 1400, he told of winter with all its harsh rigours, its freezing rain and snows, its howling winds. He conjured up the sense of cold with an intensity hardly matched till Keats wrote the *Eve of St. Agnes*. He laid his scene realistically in the English north country, on heath and crag and in tangled forests of hoar oaks, hazel, and hawthorn. He swept through this wilderness three great hunts that seem transcripts from life. He breathed into courtliness the naturalness of fine, happy people, rejoicing, even joking together. Here, in truth, and at its best, is "merry England," splendid, stalwart, joyous, with its great Christmas and New Year feasts and frolics, inspired by wine and mirth.

The *Gawain*-poet not only made of his romance a lai but also, in its dramatic effectiveness, something of an interlude, with which, as his own reference shows, he was familiar. Scenes are sharply set; speeches reveal character; gestures and bearing are indicated with lively verisimilitude. The Green Knight, enacting the role of the Challenger, does so with all the gusto of an accomplished mummer. He rolls his red eyes, wags his great beard, boasts and taunts derisively, makes, after his decapitation, a tremendous, noisy exit.⁴⁸ Though at first he seems almost gigantic (*half etayn*, vs. 140), actually he towers only by a head or so over other men (vs. 332). Apart from his green hue and separable head, he is represented as a fine, handsome, human figure. Later, at the Green Chapel, when he has finished his final testing of Gawain, he drops on the instant his role of magic horror and becomes again the gallant, benevolent Bercilak, full of warm goodwill. Though

C. O. Chapman, *Index of Names in Pearl, Purity, Patience, and Sir Gawain* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1951).

⁴⁶ L. B. Wright in *MLN*, xl (1926), 96-100, and preceding article.

⁴⁷ Garrett, "The Lay of *GGK*," *JEGP*, xxiv (1925), 125-34.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Wright in *JEGP*, xxxiv (1935), 157-63.

no moment in medieval romance surpasses in eerie terror that in which he held up his severed head and its eyes opened on Arthur's stricken court (vs. 446), he is primarily described, not as a supernatural being, but as a man acting a part. The gruesome incident of his decapitation is dismissed by Arthur himself, as no more than a play, the device of an interlude (vs. 472). Like Chaucer in the *Franklin's Tale* (vs. 1140),⁴⁹ similarly indulging in a bit of rationalizing over the dramatic illusions of skillful magicians, the *Gawain*-poet was inclined to minimize marvels. He jokes a little about those Gawain encountered on his terrible journey; it would be too "tore" (hard, vs. 719) to tell a tenth of them; anyway the fighting with giants and trolls was not so bad as the winter weather! He derisively pictured Morgain la Fée, though he called her a goddess, only as an ugly, squat, old lady.

As an artist the *Gawain*-poet had the habit of close visual observation and an exceptional sense of form, proportion, and design. As a connoisseur familiar with costly things and courtly taste and custom, he pauses to describe exquisite trifles of embroidery or jewellery, rich fabrics, fine armour. He dwells on the architectural details of the great castle that Gawain first sees shimmering through the distant trees, then in all the glory of its chalk-white, many-towered magnificence. The poet accents social sophistication; manners are polished, talk is an art. The conversations between Gawain and the lady suggest the advances, the retreats, of a courtly dance. Within the set pattern of perfect courtesy, wit meets wit; a gracious comedy of manners is enacted. Temptation is offered to Gawain and refused largely in the tone of light social badinage. One has but to read other society romances⁵⁰ in Middle English to recognize the difference between them and the greater elegance, the more assured touch, of the *Gawain*-poet. Moreover, in this romance, unlike many others, there is no inchoate rambling, no waste. The episodes move directly from cause to consequence and individual act and character are finely linked. Situations are repeated, but with skilful,

⁴⁹ For illustration of an *entremets* presented at the French court in 1378 see preceding article. The illustration accords with Chaucer's description (*Franklin's Tale*, vss. 1140-51) of the arts of "subtile tregetoures."

⁵⁰ S. F. Barrow, *Medieval Society Romances* (New York, 1924), Appendix. The English *William of Palerne*, though commissioned by Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, has, in comparison with its French original, a homely tone. L. A. Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in England* (New York, 1924, 1960), pp. 214-23. Even Chaucer's *Troilus* is less consistently courtly than GGK.

deliberate variety and contrast. Court scenes at royal Camelot are different from those at Bercilak's castle; the three temptations of Gawain have subtle differences of tone and temper; the three hunts, whether they have allegorical significance or not, are as different from each other as are the hunted beasts; each hunt implies expert familiar knowledge.⁵¹ The rich indoor revels, whether at Arthur's court or Bercilak's castle, are effectively alternated with cruel winter realities without, and so is the gay fellowship indoors with Gawain's stark loneliness as he goes by desolate crags to seek his death.

The romance has superlative art in its fashioning; it is mature, deliberate, richly seasoned by an author who never suggests minstrel servility or even compliment to those who hear him.⁵² He wrote in his own way and apparently for his own delight in a provincial dialect and in the alliterative verse which belonged to that same north country which he pictured with such startling vigour.

But above all else the romance has a quality of spiritual distinction comparable to that in the *Pearl*. Piety, devotion, purity of thought, are natural to it. Gentle meditations occur, on Troy's vanished glory, on the swift passing seasons with all their yesterdays, on the pentangle⁵³ as symbol of the endless interlocking of the knot of truth. Richly informed about the lovely things of life, the poem is without asceticism or intolerance. It has no mysticism; Gawain is called the Virgin's knight (vs. 1769), but he sees no vision, goes on no holy quest. Its deep concern is not with evil, but with good. In this Gawain, the blithe young embodiment of chivalry at its best,⁵⁴ goodness is made manifest and radiant, but not, as in Galahad of the Grail romances, a supernatural virtue touched by a mysterious divinity. The "fine issue" of his story is not that he fell into vulgar sin, but that he failed to keep good-

⁵¹ Savage in *JEGP*, xxvii (1928), 1-15; Savage, *The Gawain-Poet*, pp. 13, 32-48, 224.

⁵² There are references to a listening audience in vss. 30, 624, 1996. For Chaucer's use of such minstrel tags as "I yow telle" and "be stille," see *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, ed. Bryan and Dempster (Chicago, 1941), pp. 496-503. Like Chaucer, the *Gawain*-poet may well have expected his work to be read aloud. Such expressions may echo a minstrel convention, but they do not prove minstrel authorship.

⁵³ On the pentangle see Hulbert in *MP*, xiii, 721-30; R. S. Loomis in *JEGP*, xlii, 167-9; Savage, *Gawain-Poet*, p. 158-68; Ackerman in *Anglia*, lxxvi (1958) 254-65.

⁵⁴ Cf. B. J. Whiting, "Gawain, his Reputation, His Courtesy, and His Appearance in Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*," *Medieval Studies*, ix (1947), 189-254.

ness perfect. Moral earnestness could hardly go farther.⁵⁵ Gawain's confession of his fault in breaking his word to save his life reveals a deep sense of Man's responsibility for his every act, no matter how deadly the betraying circumstance. For the author, as for William of Wykeham, "Manners [in the sense of morals] maketh Man." Integrity knows no compromise. Wholeheartedly Gawain recognizes this rigorous truth and contrition overwhelms him. Unlike other Arthurian heroes, he returns to Arthur's court, not in conventional glory, but in self-confessed shame. Yet, as noted above, that shame gave him new grace, and the Round Table achieved a new nobility by its act of compassionate fellowship. Henceforth all the knights will wear as a baldric the green girdle that was, to Gawain, the mark of his shame.⁵⁶ No other medieval poet, save Wolfram von Eschenbach, has so transformed traditional romantic materials by the grace of his own spiritual insight, or given them more enduring significance.

⁵⁵ Mabel Day in *GGK*, p. xxxv, thought the story "the vehicle of a great moral lesson."

⁵⁶ Kittredge, *op. cit.*, pp. 139 f., rejected the girdle as a feature of Celtic origin, but see R. S. Loomis in *JEGP*, xlii. 149-55.

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